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JOB CORPS

Dollars and Dropouts

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JOB CORPS

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BY
CHRISTOPHER WEEKS, 1930-

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*To Chester Maggard, and to the other young
men and women of America who look
to the Job Corps for the fulfillment
of their hopes and dreams*

JOB CORPS

Dollars and Dropouts

I

INTRODUCTION

ON January 15, 1965, thirty young men slowly filed off a chartered bus into the ankle-deep snow that covered Camp Catoctin, the site of an old Civilian Conservation Corps camp across the highway from Eisenhower's Camp David retreat in rural Maryland. Drawn from the depths of poverty-stricken Appalachia and the ghettos of Baltimore, these men were the first Job Corps recruits entering the first Job Corps center; in the next two years, seventy-five thousand other teen-age boys and girls from poverty backgrounds, and from every state in the union, would follow their tracks.

The hopes of these young men ran high. They had been told about a new program — nationwide in scope — which would give them the education and job training they wanted in order to be a success in life. They would get this in a place called a Job Corps center where they would live for six months or more with other boys. At the cen-

ter they would get three square meals a day, learn how to use power tools and heavy equipment like bulldozers and dump trucks, and have plenty of chances for sports and recreation. In addition they would get spending money, and be issued clean clothes. At the end of their training, the Job Corps would help them find a job and pay them a muster-
ing out allowance to tide them over until the first paycheck came in.

They knew they had been selected because they were dropouts who had little future; to most of them this was an already painfully clear fact of life — at least until the Job Corps recruiter came along. Now they were in the Job Corps. One of them quickly made up a motto for the new program; his proposal was “Your Last Chance.”

But much more than just the hopes of those thirty young men were at stake that day. For Sargent Shriver, President Johnson’s choice as commander-in-chief of the War on Poverty, knew that the fledgling poverty program would be under the gun to produce visible results fast. Only ten months before, he had testified before a Congressional Committee that “this Country . . . has both the resources and the know-how to eliminate grinding poverty.” But he knew that many Americans doubted whether a poverty program could work. Some said that poor people were basically undeserving and neither merited nor warranted a chance to get a better education, a better job, or a

better life. Others, quoting the Bible, said that the poor would always be with us, that no one knew how to solve problems as big and as complex as Harlem or Appalachia. Shriver knew that the poverty program would be short-lived indeed unless it could produce evidence to disprove these widely held convictions.

Shriver also knew that most of the programs in the omnibus poverty package passed by Congress six months earlier would be either too small or too dependent on traditionally sluggish local agencies to produce this evidence.

But the Job Corps was different. For one thing, it seemed to be patterned after one of the most amazing social action successes ever registered by the federal government — the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's. It was focused on a specific problem of undeniably critical proportions — masses of teen-agers who had been born into and raised in poverty, and who, because of this background, had little hope for earning a decent income or becoming productive citizens during their lives. To solve this problem, it seemed to have a promising formula for success — take these youngsters out of their ghetto tenements and rural shacks and put them in a clean, healthful Job Corps center where massive injections of remedial education and job training would turn them into law-abiding, tax-paying good neighbors. And supervising the application of this success formula

would be some of the nation's leading universities and corporations, organizations which brought an extraordinarily impressive amount of brainpower and administrative ability to bear on the problem, and which seemed to have the flexibility to introduce new techniques that public school systems couldn't or wouldn't adopt.

And so, as the Job Corps got under way, it bore a dual responsibility. It not only had to put an extremely complex program into operation on a nationwide scale, but it had to do it fast, with impressive, early, and visible results. It had to prove that teen-agers at the bottom of our society would respond to an opportunity to better themselves, and it had to show that we had the techniques to increase their earning power and remold their social attitudes.

For the first few months of its life, it looked as if the Job Corps would fulfill its dual mission. Teen-agers by the hundreds of thousands applied to get in. Most of those who were accepted clearly came from the depths of poverty, and they seemed to respond enthusiastically to the reading, math, and vocational training programs. One of the first Job Corps recruits summed up his reaction several weeks later:

This was the opportunity I had, the only one I ever had to make something of myself. If I didn't take it now, I might *never* make some-

thing of myself. I haven't missed a class here and I don't intend to.

At Job Corps headquarters, a kind of euphoria permeated the overworked, undermanned staff, and early press reports glowed with warm praise for the program.

But the honeymoon with the press was short-lived, and the euphoria quickly dissipated. First, the news broke that recruits into the Job Corps were dropping out in large numbers. Then Corpsmen became involved in a series of incidents which culminated in two riots. Local communities turned hostile to nearby Job Corps centers, and began to urge they be closed down or moved elsewhere. New management had to be brought in to salvage two centers that were clearly floundering. And Congress and other critics uncovered evidence of administrative foibles and internal controversies within the Job Corps which drew nationwide attention, threats of investigations, and complaints from the Administration's staunchest friends on Capitol Hill.

And many of the enrollees in the Job Corps came to doubt its effectiveness. Said one Corpsman who recently "graduated" to a job picking up papers and hand-mowing lawns in public parks, "The Job Corps — it's the biggest lie of them all." He quit after only a few weeks at work.

In short, doubts have been raised on many

fronts about whether the Job Corps is working, doubts which clearly cast a pall over its future. But before the future of the Job Corps is decided, its past should be understood. What follows is the story of the Job Corps — the forces which brought it into being, the plans which set it on its course, and the strains and tensions which have beset its operations.

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IT was Tuesday, August 4, 1964, and the latest vote count from the party whips on Capitol Hill in Washington showed 196 Congressmen for President Johnson's poverty bill, and 196 against. A dozen more or so would not be in town on Wednesday when the floor debate would begin in the House of Representatives, or on Friday when the tough voting would start. But that still left thirty Congressmen undecided which way to vote on the first major piece of legislation that clearly bore the Johnson brand.

Previously this same year, Congress had responded to President Johnson's touch with swift and sometimes lopsided endorsements of bill after bill that President Kennedy had had difficulty even getting reported out of committee, much less to a floor vote. The tax cut, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Urban Mass Transportation Act, all of them key measures formulated under the Ken-

nedy administration, were already passed and signed into law. Some claimed that Congress had acted largely out of respect and perhaps pangs of guilt in response to the national anguish caused by the assassination of the youthful leader who had personally created a new aura of dignity and a refreshing sense of vigor and direction in the Presidency. Others ascribed the change in the tides on Capitol Hill to the artistry of Johnsonian political manipulation — the intuitive touch of the master tactician who always knew exactly which combination of pressure and persuasion could turn which Congressman's vote to support the President's program.

The idea of a poverty program as a major new government initiative was crystallized under Kennedy, and he had used the phrase "War Against Poverty" as early as his 1960 campaign. But the master chef who compiled the ingredients and supervised as they were blended into one *chef d'oeuvre* was Lyndon Baines Johnson. And the political gourmets knew this. In an election year, this was the bill which would show whether the new President's magic worked only because Congress felt charged with a responsibility to fulfill the Kennedy legacy, or whether Johnson had the persuasive power to realize his own legislative initiatives. In a very real sense, the poverty program would be the test case to see whether the battle standards of the Great Society could be raised up in place of

the somewhat tattered flags of the New Frontier.

The gauntlet had been thrown down on St. Patrick's Day, four and one-half months earlier. Sargent Shriver, President Kennedy's brother-in-law, led off five weeks of hearings before Adam Clayton Powell's House Education and Labor Subcommittee in defense of the Johnson poverty bill, euphemistically labeled the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. From the very first day of these hearings, the Republicans served notice that the War on Poverty would not get bipartisan support. Congressman Peter Freylinghuysen, blue-blooded commander-in-chief of the Republican opposition, immediately charged that the program was a collection of stale old ideas which Congress had refused to pass singly on their own merits. The proposed new poverty agency would only add to the confusion and duplication in existing programs, and Shriver, as "Poverty Czar," would be given unlimited authority to usurp the powers of Cabinet officers, Freylinghuysen declared.

Nevertheless, the House Education and Labor Committee had reported out the bill on a straight party line vote two and a half months later. Since then the Administration, in a surprise move, had pushed the legislation to the Senate floor for a vote and come out with a resounding victory. Now, however, the bill's defenders and opponents were both building up for the decisive final confrontation on the floor of the House of Representatives.

And the issue was clearly in doubt. Thirty undecided Congressmen held the balance of power.

These thirty Congressmen fell into two loosely affiliated groups. On the one hand, a dozen or so moderate to liberal Republicans, largely from Pennsylvania and the Northeast, were faced with a tough dilemma. Coming from districts where poverty was present but not overwhelming, they were nevertheless sympathetic to the goals and objectives of the poverty package — and their voters were, too. It was tough to vote against Sargent Shriver, the man who had created the Peace Corps miracle, and who now persuasively argued that the new poverty bill was prudent, economic, focused, and consistent with every great American tradition, including local control and individual initiative.

But these same Republicans had been flattened by the Goldwater streamroller at the Presidential nominating convention only three weeks earlier. And the poverty bill was clearly a Democratic program backed by a Democratic President. Could they really take the heat of supporting a measure, the passage of which could only boost Johnson's November election chances?

On the other hand, a similar number of Democrats from marginal southern states confronted an equally difficult decision. Concentrated in the North Carolina delegation, they recognized the need back in their districts for the programs em-

bodied in the omnibus poverty package. In fact, the Ford Foundation had already financed the beginnings of a promising effort backed by the Governor of North Carolina and operating through a new organization called the North Carolina Fund. But these were also men of heritage. They had just been badly torn by the bloody fight over the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Now they were being pressed to vote for a bill which southern critics claimed was designed to force southern compliance with the Civil Rights Act. These Congressmen were well aware that one effect of any poverty program in the South would be accelerated integration. Furthermore, they shared the historic southern distrust of northern intellectuals and know-it-alls.

That Tuesday morning, four of the top aides from the President's Task Force for the War on Poverty gathered in the unpretentious fifth-floor office in the Peace Corps building formerly occupied by Presidential Assistant Bill Moyers when he was Deputy Director of the Peace Corps. For the last five months, however, this office had been the base of operations for Adam Yarmolinsky, one of Defense Secretary McNamara's brightest, most acerbic analysts. Only a few days after the President had appointed Shriver to head up the planning for the great poverty war, Yarmolinsky had come over from the Pentagon as deputy to Shriver and prospective number two man in the new poverty agency, when established.

But that day, the issue was whether there ever would be a new agency. And seated on the right-hand end of the old overstuffed government-issue leather couch was an emissary representing powers who could affect the outcome of that issue. Those powers were the groups making up the powerful conservation lobby, known to be influential with several of the undecided northern Republicans. The emissary was authorized to strike a bargain. The product for sale — active support for the poverty bill from the conservation lobby agencies. The price — a guarantee written into the law that a substantial number of the enrollees in the Job Corps would be assigned to a “Youth Conservation Corps,” which would put them to work in national parks and forests. The man behind the emissary — Dr. Spencer Smith, spokesman for the Citizens Committee on Natural Resources and dean of the groups in Washington which work for greater federal support for preserving forests, building parks, and saving wildlife.

In a quick conference, Yarmolinsky consulted with his aides on the advisability of agreeing to such a guarantee. The answer — no problem as far as agreeing that many of the Job Corps enrollees would be assigned to conservation work projects. Shriver had already gone on record before both the House and Senate Committees to state that half of the enrollees the first year would live in conservation centers run by the Departments of

Agriculture and Interior. Both Departments were already deeply involved in designing centers, locating sites, and laying out work programs. Even had there been a desire to do so, it was too late to backtrack on those plans.

But the provision for a separate Youth Conservation Corps would raise problems. It broke down the concept of a unified national program. The Task Force planners — mostly educators and youth experts — were deeply suspicious of the old-line bureaucrats in the conservation agencies, who seemed to care only about how much work they could get done, not what happened to the boys who were enrolled. So one aide sat down at an old typewriter in one corner and banged out a “quick and dirty” paragraph to be put into the bill requiring that 40 percent of the enrollees in the Job Corps would be assigned to conservation centers under the supervision of federal or state conservation agencies. The Youth Conservation Corps language was omitted. One aide argued that a lower percentage should be inserted because future plans called for more vocational training and less work. But another replied that a commitment to assign as many as 30 or 40 percent of the enrollees really wouldn’t alter plans significantly. So the emissary left with the rough draft and a license to negotiate for any figure up to 40 percent.

Later that afternoon the call came back. The bargain was struck. The right Congressmen had

been contacted and urged to support the bill. But on Friday, when the amendment was formally proposed on the floor of the House of Representatives, it had been rewritten to establish a separate Youth Conservation Corps as well as to require that 40 percent of the Job Corps trainees be assigned to conservation work. This last reshuffle was recognized too late, and the amendment passed by simple voice vote.

Something else happened on the floor that Friday, too. At a critical point in the voting, a member of the GOP rose to attack the bill by quoting several phrases from an internal memorandum which Yarmolinsky had authored. Quoted out of context, these phrases implied that Defense Department funds were already being used to build and equip some Job Corps training centers, even though the poverty legislation hadn't even been passed by Congress. Though the implication was misleading, copies of the memorandum had been bootlegged to Congress by Yarmolinsky enemies in the Defense Department.

Immediately Phil Landrum, the smooth and savvy Congressman from Georgia who — in a masterstroke of political maneuvering — had been asked to floor-manage the bill in order to blunt the expected attack from southern conservatives, rose at his seat. Yarmolinsky, the man who had engineered the compromise to win over the northern Republicans and who had been even more instru-

mental than Shriver in designing the structure of the poverty bill, was to be excommunicated from any of its operations, Landrum announced. The southern Democrats had asked for and gotten their pound of flesh — assurance that the abrasive, intellectual Jew of Russian extraction who had roughed up the military rank and file in the Defense Department, and who was reputed to have been responsible for orders forcing base commanders in the South to declare segregated facilities in nearby towns off-limits to servicemen, would thereafter be barred from any job in Johnson's poverty agency.

With these two last-minute tactical moves completed, the stage was set for the crucial floor vote. The Administration won, 225 to 197, and the opposition collapsed. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 passed the next day, and on August 20, with great fanfare but without the presence of Adam Yarmolinsky, the President signed the Act into law in the usual ceremony in the White House rose garden.

This little political play-within-a-play may seem inconsequential to understanding why there is a Job Corps today, and what the conflicts are that still surround it. It is not. For this drama was the culmination of a history behind the Job Corps stretching back more than thirty years, and the quick clash of interests which took place during the first

weeks of August 1964 is symbolic of the strains and tensions which characterize its history and which have beset the program since its inception.

To understand that history, the pages of time must be turned back to Saturday, March 4, 1933. On a platform erected over the steps of the East Front of the Capitol, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was delivering his first inaugural address. As he spoke, the country was in deep economic trouble, deeper than it had ever been before or than it has ever been since. More than twelve million workers — one out of every four in the labor force — were unemployed. Industrial production had dropped to less than two thirds of the 1929 level. Exports were down a fantastic 75 percent from predepression levels. The Dow-Jones stock index stood at 20 percent of its 1929 level, and every other economic indicator pointed toward crisis.

Even worse, in the weeks just before the inauguration, the basic financial structure of the country — the banking system — started to break down. In late 1932, Nevada was forced to declare a bank holiday as depositors withdrew their accounts in panic. On February 10, 1933, Michigan followed suit. On the twenty-third, less than two weeks before the inauguration, Indiana closed its banks, followed two days later by Maryland, and in short succession, Arkansas and Ohio. Depositor panic spread rapidly during the next week, and seven-

teen more states ordered bank closings. In the early morning hours of Inauguration Day, Treasury officials appealed in frantic haste to the governors of all remaining states to join in the declaration of a national bank holiday.

As President Roosevelt laid out his battle plan for attacking the economic malaise which had stricken this country and most of the rest of the world, the financial heart of the United States had literally stopped beating. "Our greatest primary task," he declared, "is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously." Before the day was out, the President had scribbled on a scrap of paper a proposed organization for a program to put the unemployed to work on conservation and public resources projects on a major scale.

Less than a week later, Roosevelt's lieutenants reported back to him that the plan sketched on that scrap of paper was workable — the conservation agencies, the Army, the Labor Department, and the Budget Bureau went to work full blast to draft legislation and fill out the organizational details. On March 21, the President forwarded his proposed program to Congress, saying, "I propose to create a civilian conservation corps." If Congress acted speedily, he predicted that as many as 250,000 men could be put to work by early summer.

And Congress responded. On March 31, the

President signed into law the Emergency Conservation Work Act of 1933. Five days later, the lawyers had an Executive Order ready for the President's signature, setting up a new Civilian Conservation Corps agency, and empowering its director with the authorities he needed to get under way. *Two days later*, the first enrollee was inducted into the fledgling CCC, and on April 17, the first work camp opened in the George Washington National Forest near Luray, Virginia. Nationwide recruiting began in full swing, and the CCC was a reality.

Forty-four days had elapsed since the President had set his course and penciled his plan of action on a scrap of paper. Already the first enrollees were at work setting up the first camp just three hours' drive from the Capitol. Driven by the restless energy and anxious sense of urgency which characterized the early years of the New Deal, the machinery of the bureaucracy worked with incredible responsiveness to its new mission. Money was allocated quickly from the Treasury and Budget Bureau to the new CCC agency. The Labor Department's usually sluggish Employment Service lined up recruits in every state on a massive scale. Conservation agencies laid out campsites and work plans, and then threw practically every forest ranger and park superintendent into action. The Army backed up the entire operation with supplies, clothes, tents, trucks, and work equipment.

What happened over the next seventy days has practically no parallel in the peacetime history of government in action. For this was no simple operation. In early April, there were no CCC enrollees, no camp facilities, no staffs to supervise work or handle the administration, no administrative procedures to tell camp directors how much money they could spend for what purposes, and no stores of equipment to be used for work projects. Everything had to be done at once — and somehow or other it was.

One month after the first CCC camp in the George Washington National Forest opened, more than sixty-two thousand men had enrolled in the Corps, and were at work in centers in nearly every state. *In the next three weeks, the Corps quadrupled in size.* And by the first of July, the President's goal had been exceeded by nearly 20 percent — 296,700 men had been enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps, and 1,468 CCC camps had been set up and were already operating in every state of the Union.

Whether in the private or the public domain, great innovations and significant breakthroughs originate in many different ways. Some are conceived in the quiet of a cloister, and then methodically tested, evaluated, retested, and re-evaluated before they are released to the world. Others are born in the heat of a furnace, and thrust into action on a grand scale largely on the basis of timeli-

ness and conviction rather than objective testing.

Born in the heat of a furnace, the Civilian Conservation Corps was hurled at the world largely out of conviction that it *had* to work. The CCC was the first of the new emergency agencies set up by President Roosevelt and his administration. It must not fail, partly because there was no alternative, and partly because it would have clouded the future of its sister programs of the New Deal. By July of 1933, there was no question about whether the CCC could put large numbers of young unemployed males in camps in rural areas. But whether, once there, they would stay because they thought they were getting something useful out of it, and whether Congress would continue the program because it thought the country was getting something useful out of it, remained to be proven.

The answers came quickly. The lines of applicants for the CCC grew longer and longer. Congress appropriated larger and larger sums for its operation, and the President raised the limits on its enrollment to 350,000 in 1934, and then to over half a million in 1935. The Corps reached its peak on-board strength of 505,000 in August 1935, and thereafter enrollment sloped off very gradually over the next three years as the economy took up the slack between what it could produce and what it actually produced.

By 1938, five years after its inauguration, the Ci-

vilian Conservation Corps had spent \$2 billion, had enrolled well over two million men. But Pearl Harbor and the expansion of war industries brought an abrupt end to the program which had been the vanguard of the New Deal. In 1941, the President had to turn back \$95 million of the funds Congress appropriated for the CCC; there simply were not enough recruits to fill the quotas. With the war against Japan and the Axis powers less than four months old, the President was faced with a recommendation from the Joint Committee on Reduction of Nonessential Federal Expenditures to abolish the Corps. Moreover, this report was signed by influential members of Congress *and* his own Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau.

The President and other supporters of the Corps opposed the recommendation vigorously, pointing out that 90 percent of the Corps members were below draft age, and that these young men were developing capabilities valuable to the war effort. But the country agreed with Senator McKellar of Tennessee. Speaking at a special Senate Committee hearing on March 23, 1942, he led the attack, saying, "This country has never been more prosperous than it is today. Jobs have never been easier for young people to get than they are today, and for these young people, especially those of military age, to be employed in the CCC at a time like this,

under the circumstances we have facing us, seems to me to be indefensible.”

On July 2, 1942, Congress passed legislation *requiring* the immediate termination of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Camps were dismantled, enrollees sent home, and staff members released for other assignments. At the early age of nine, the Civilian Conservation Corps was dead, a victim of outside circumstances which eliminated the need for special employment programs.

Though its bureaucratic life ran out in 1942, the concept of the Civilian Conservation Corps and what it had meant for the country did not die. Over the next sixteen years, conservationists called — in voices that went largely unheard — for its re-establishment. In 1950, new legislation was introduced to resurrect the Corps, and hearings were even held by a House Subcommittee. But support within the Truman administration was split between the resource management agencies who clearly endorsed their need for new hands at work in conservation, and the more skeptical educators and labor analysts. Roll Grigsby, Deputy Commissioner of Education for the Federal Security Agency, summed up the opposition by saying: “In short, assuming no rapid worsening of the unemployment situation, we believe the re-establishment of the Civilian Conservation Corps should await accumulation of experience with measures

for improving the education and training of youth in the presently established educational institutions." Legislation to reincarnate the CCC got nowhere.

But in 1958, the Democrat party leaders in Congress, their eyes on the 1960 Presidential elections, started to sift through possibilities for new proposals on which to build their platform. Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota proposed new legislation to create a program to put unemployed young men to work in the woods. And Congressman John Blatnik — also from Minnesota and himself formerly a supervisor in a CCC camp — duplicated Humphrey's effort on the House side. Neither bill created much interest outside the conservation movement.

But the tenacious Senator from Minnesota would not give up. In January 1959, he took his proposal to a broader audience; in *Harper's* magazine he laid out his "Plan to Save Trees, Land, and Boys." On the one hand, he said, juvenile delinquents are flooding police stations and courtrooms — boys who are on the streets with nothing to do except get into trouble. And on the other, our forests are dwindling, our parks are getting as crowded as Yankee Stadium for a Sunday double-header, and our topsoil is rapidly washing out to sea, leaving arid gullies behind. What is more natural than to take these young men away from lives

of “delinquency, violence, and self-destruction” and put them to work to save our natural beauty for all citizens to enjoy?

Support for Humphrey’s Youth Conservation Corps plan started to rally. Hearings were held in committee, and a bill actually squeaked through the Senate on a 47 to 45 vote, despite the active opposition of the Eisenhower administration. The bill died, however, because the House refused to consider it.

In 1960, the Democratic party adopted as one plank in its platform a recommendation for “the establishment of a Youth Conservation Corps, to give underprivileged young people a rewarding experience in a healthful environment.” And Kennedy’s campaign speeches specifically endorsed the Youth Conservation Corps by name three separate times, including one endorsement of the then pending Humphrey bill providing for a Corps of 100,000 young men.

But the vital questions of precisely who would be enrolled in the program, and what its fundamental purposes were, were handled ambivalently. The youthful campaigner who wanted to get the country on the move again stressed the social impact of the program in his message to the nation’s new voters, saying:

I have proposed a program to create new frontiers of opportunity for young Americans by

establishing a youth conservation corps to combat juvenile delinquency and to provide healthful and useful opportunities for young people in our Nation's parks and forests.

But three weeks later, in his position paper on natural resources, he tactfully omitted any mention of juvenile delinquents, stating simply that:

It would be the job of this corps of 100,000 young men between the ages of 18 and 25 to work to preserve our forests, stock our lakes and rivers, clear our streams, and protect America's abundance of natural resources.

Looking back from our present vantage point, the kind of thinking that lay behind these first Youth Conservation Corps proposals may seem incredibly naïve and simplistic. Most knowledgeable analysts today would immediately reject the hypothesis that the problems of juvenile delinquency and underinvestment in conservation can be solved simply by putting delinquents to work in rural conservation centers. But the originators of these proposals should not be blamed for oversimplifying this very complex problem. The entire country only dimly perceived its own social problems as the decade of the fifties came to an end.

In part this situation resulted from the fact that our most respected social analysts and observers

tended to diagnose the nature of our social maladies incorrectly. John Kenneth Galbraith, for instance, in *The Affluent Society*, found no reason for alarm in looking at the nation's poor. Since the overall number of poor people was gradually diminishing, it seemed clear to him that there was nothing inherently intractable about the circumstances in which poor people lived. Furthermore, he felt that most of the remaining poverty in the country could be ascribed to two relatively simple causes. People remained poor either because they lived in isolated environments where they could not take advantage of modern services and opportunities, or else suffered from some individual handicap which prevented them from participating effectively in society. Readers of *The Affluent Society* could take comfort in its general conclusion that poverty was no longer a serious problem nor were there any systemic factors in our society which indicated that poverty would become a potential sore spot.

This kind of analysis fell on ears which seemed eager to hear that social problems didn't really exist. Most Americans appeared to believe that what poverty they came into contact with could easily be explained away. Boys and girls dropped out of school because they were bad; the fact that so many of them got into trouble after they dropped out just proved the point. People were unemployed because they were lazy, or refused to move

to a place where there were jobs available. Tenements were filled with people who lived in crowded deprivation because these people were generally shiftless and indigent. Besides, they really didn't seem to mind living that way; every time they moved into a shiny new public housing project, they quickly made a shambles out of it. In short, what few people remained living in poverty were there because they deserved to be poor, and perhaps even liked it that way.

In 1960, the country was on the verge of emerging from a decade of directionlessness and passive complacency toward domestic problems. The youth of the country, born during and after the Second World War, remembered nothing of the depression. Unlike the draft-card burners and demonstrators who rally for causes ranging from Vietnam to free speech, the college generations of the fifties stalwartly resisted scattered attempts to rouse their social consciousness. Even issues like school desegregation failed to take the headlines away for long from the Cold War and Sputniks. As the well-known University of Chicago economist Theodore Schultz noted, "We have long been complacent about American poverty, saying to each other, we are the affluent society. Unfortunately we are ill prepared to act because we have been out of touch. Our ideas of poverty are mostly of the New Deal vintage which are very obsolete."

3

IN 1961, domestic poverty was neither perceived as a serious problem nor considered an issue requiring urgent government action. For example, although Kennedy had spoken about a “War on Poverty” during the 1960 campaign, he used the phrase in a speech to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Social Security Act. The speech dealt only with the problems of the elderly. In his inaugural address, he declared that we now have the power and resources and know-how to abolish all forms of poverty. But the context makes it clear that he was thinking primarily of the millions of destitute people on the brink of absolute starvation abroad, not the underprivileged at home.

Yet, by the time of the assassination, President Kennedy had already set the wheels of government in motion to develop a poverty program — a major new nationwide effort led by the federal government concentrating exclusively on raising

the hopes and capacities of thirty-five million poor Americans. This did not happen by chance. For somehow, in the intervening months, the country had turned introspective, and a sharp change had occurred in our assessment of the importance and complexity of our internal problems.

During Kennedy's initial months in the White House, he was overwhelmingly preoccupied with the issues of our military strength and foreign policy. Having raised the specter of a "missile gap" during the campaign, and convinced that our defense posture was far below acceptable standards, the President gave military needs the top priority in his first budget. One result of this decision was that practically no funds were available for new domestic initiatives.

As defense problems dominated the budget, so did international problems demand the bulk of Kennedy's time and attention. The Bay of Pigs, the Berlin situation, the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the Peace Corps, the reorganization of the foreign aid program, and the Cuban missile crisis practically monopolized the President's calendar; domestic issues, with few exceptions, either never got to the President at all, or received second priority treatment within the White House and Budget Bureau staff.

But as the months passed, the focus of Presidential attention began to shift. Second looks at our missile position as compared with Russia's and our

overall relative defensive posture suggested that our situation was far stronger than had earlier been thought. In the international arena, the men of the New Frontier found they had overestimated the ability of the United States to influence the course of events. Foreign aid turned out to be a disappointing tool either for stimulating positive political changes or for supporting economic growth. The political persuasive power of the government through diplomatic channels proved to be a "sometime" thing. And the new men at the top found the labyrinthine lower echelons of the State Department almost impossible to penetrate, much less redirect. More and more they found themselves dealing with the obvious crises in our international relations but unable to find an opening through which they could reshape and remold policy, as it relentlessly and inexorably churned out of the Foreign Service bureaucracy.

Meanwhile on the domestic front, civil rights issues which had lain smoldering in the past were suddenly thrust into the national headlines through the direct action of both northerners and southerners. Peaceful sit-ins carried out under the new umbrella of non-violent action spread across the South. Freedom riders tested southern segregation practices, and were assaulted brutally in the process. Riots broke out in Birmingham, Alabama, and a Negro named James Meredith applied for admission to the University of Mississippi.

At the same time, United States Steel defied the President and raised its prices, only to back down before an unusual display of White House wrath. And the design of the tax-cut package inevitably raised issues of domestic policy which had previously been unable to win the President's attention. Gradually the President was forced to devote more and more of his time to internal issues which raised a whole series of questions about our society and economy, and the relation of government to them.

As the Kennedy administration took office in 1961, its preoccupation with issues of defense and foreign policy did not completely exclude some modest initiatives on the domestic front. Senator Humphrey forced the Youth Conservation Corps issue by submitting his own bill to the Senate as soon as the eighty-seventh session of Congress opened its doors. Downtown at the Budget Bureau, however, analysts were unconvinced that the Conservation Corps by itself was an adequate answer to the problem of youth unemployment and juvenile delinquency. Some were skeptical of the benefits to be derived from taking young men out of cities and putting them to work in the woods for a year or more. And within the low budgetary guidelines established by the President for youth employment programs, only a very small fraction of the out-of-school, out-of-work teen-agers could be placed in conservation centers because of the high

cost of the program per enrollee. Therefore, for both substantive and budgetary reasons, two new sections were added to the bill. The first of these sections provided funds for giving high school dropouts jobs in local public agencies, and the second expanded an existing program for giving job training to unemployed teenagers.

As the New Frontier proposals were sent from the White House to Congress, James Conant, former president of Harvard University, released the findings of a study he had just completed — findings which directly challenged the country's complacent conception of one of its most hallowed institutions, the public schools. With a grant from the Carnegie Foundation, Conant pulled together a staff of experts which sifted the facts on city school systems and found structural flaws that could not be denied. His most basic finding: Social dynamite is building up in our large cities in the form of unemployed out-of-school youth, especially in the Negro slums. The inescapable conclusion from his analysis: People not only shape the social institutions that surround them, but also in turn are shaped by these institutions. The status, ambitions, and political leverage of poor families lead directly to low-quality schools in slums, and the low quality of the schools in these slums in turn reinforces the low status, stunted ambitions, and political powerlessness of the families whose children attend them.

Conant announced his findings in a speech before the National Committee for Children and Youth on May 29, 1961. And it was hardly two weeks later that Secretary of Labor Arthur Goldberg was quoting Conant's findings in testimony before both House and Senate Subcommittees on President Kennedy's proposed Youth Employment Act. Armed with statistics, Goldberg threw the focus of the hearings directly onto the problem of mass youth unemployment.

But Goldberg came under fire from both Republicans and Democrats. The former questioned whether the expense was justified when the federal government was still running at a large deficit. The Republicans also openly wondered about the Youth Conservation Corps section — what would a year in the woods do to qualify a teen-age school dropout for a job in a highly mechanized, increasingly urban society? On the other side of the aisle, the Administration's proposal was attacked for being too timid. The total cost was only \$75 million for all three sections, and only \$25 million would have been allocated to the Youth Conservation Corps, enough to support only six thousand enrollees.

The Senate Committee weighed both the Administration's cautious Youth Conservation Corps proposal and the far more ambitious Humphrey plan, which called for 50,000 enrollees in the first year and a buildup to 150,000 enrollees two years

later. Rejecting Kennedy's pilot approach, the Senate Committee reported out legislation with targets close to the Humphrey plan. The House Committee, on the other hand, adopted a more conservative approach. It reported out a bill with enrollment targets roughly midway between the Administration's proposal and the Senate bill.

But even with bills out of committee on both sides of the Capitol, no floor action was ever taken. In a tactical maneuver, the Senate bill was held in suspense in hopes that the House might pass a bill which could be accepted by the Senate without the necessity for a hazardous and time-consuming conference to iron out differences. But the House Rules Committee, dominated by conservative elements, pigeonholed the modest Education and Labor Committee bill and thereby frustrated further action in either chamber. The Administration did, however, achieve one small victory. The third section of its proposed Youth Employment Act — which simply broadened an already existing Labor Department program — was split off and later passed separately.

Although the New Frontier proposals for attacking problems of youth unemployment were largely stymied on Capitol Hill, things were happening at the local level. The Ford Foundation started to channel funds into several critical cities in what became known as the "Gray Areas" program. In

concept, these projects were founded on the hypothesis that poverty is the product of a complex web of economic, social, and psychological factors. The Ford programs, therefore, adopted a multifaceted approach aimed at mobilizing a wide variety of agencies to work on local neighborhood problems in a coordinated fashion. The eventual aim was to involve the entire social structure of each community in the attack. Schools, churches, welfare departments, voluntary social work groups, and existing neighborhood organizations were all encouraged to join in combination with new coordinating offices staffed by a new bureaucracy with a new vocabulary. For it was at this point that words like "comprehensive" and "coordinated" started to become enshrined as the inviolable precepts of the successful poverty program. Along with "feedback" and "remediation" and "linkages," these words became unchallengeable desirables, and any proposal which evidenced a thorough familiarity with the new jargon was guaranteed at least a careful reading.

While the battle standard of youth unemployment proved insufficiently persuasive to get legislation through Congress in 1961, a different battle flag — juvenile delinquency — did prove successful. Kennedy's Juvenile Delinquency Act of 1961 was passed, establishing a Presidential Committee and a small program staff in the Justice Depart-

ment under the tutelage of the President's brother, the Attorney General, and directed by former Olympic hockey player Dave Hackett.

Inescapably the leaders of this effort concluded that juvenile delinquency was more a symptom of poverty than a special disease that could be attacked independently of the social environment. Therefore "JD" programs quickly adopted the Ford Foundation philosophy, and project approval criteria placed great stress on mobilizing community resources on a broad scale, rather than piecemeal efforts carried out by just one or two local agencies. This reasoning, unfortunately, led the fledgling juvenile delinquency program into a tactical cul-de-sac. At the local level community agencies were wary of the new philosophy and reluctant to expose their own pet rationales and precepts to competition. One thing which might have tempted them to overcome this jealous self-protectiveness was the promise of substantial new flows of money. However, the appropriations for the JD program were so modest that the financial prize, when divided up among dozens of projects in different cities, simply wasn't big enough to overcome the insularity of the established social bureaucracies, public and private. Therefore the program faltered at the local level for months while Washington officials refused to release funds until there was evidence that the new comprehensive approaches were being adopted.

But the JD program did make one major contribution. In response to its promise, social scientists were hired by cities to study problems of slums and delinquent youth on a scale never before attempted. And this array of talent produced volumes of materials and project proposals which added significantly to the state of the art of social analysis.

When Congress adjourned in 1962, therefore, the New Frontier had few visible accomplishments on the social action front. The JD program had initiated studies and was wrestling — so far rather unsuccessfully — with the contradiction between its own philosophy and its budget. The Youth Conservation Corps and Public Service Employment programs were still bottled up in Congress, and there seemed to be little likelihood of freeing them in the near future.

Nevertheless some very subtle but important changes had taken place. What had started out initially as a series of efforts to deal with a behavioral problem — juvenile delinquency — had gradually broadened in scope. Analysts had first discovered that behind delinquency lay the more basic problem of teen-age unemployment. Then, digging further, they were beginning to uncover even more fundamental problems — slum schools, ghetto living, and broken families. Out of their analysis emerged the concept that the federal government had both the capacity and the responsibility to

stimulate some kind of action designed to alleviate or eliminate these problems. In short, the country was beginning to discover that it had serious social problems, and the government was beginning to recognize that it should and could do something about them.

Though these social problems were still ill-understood, and the possibilities for government action vague and amorphous, a much more important element was lacking. There was still no national consensus that demanded action, nor was there a rallying point around which such a national consensus could form. Therefore no sense of urgency yet diffused through the Legislative and Executive branches of government.

Beginning in January 1963, however, this situation started to change — drastically. Dwight Macdonald, writing in *The New Yorker*, observed: "In the last year we seem to have suddenly awakened, rubbing our eyes like Rip van Winkle, to the fact that mass poverty exists, and that it is one of our two gravest social problems."

What sparked this transformation? Fundamentally it was a revolution in the liberal intellectual community. Macdonald made this observation as he analyzed four new books published in 1962, all discussing the subject of poverty in America. In *Wealth and Power in America*, Gabriel Kolko of Harvard University pleaded the case for broad social measures to rebalance serious social and eco-

conomic inequities which he perceived throughout the American system. At about the same time, the Conference on Economic Progress issued an ill-assimilated statistical report on *Poverty and Deprivation*. Early in the year, the results of an extensive study, directed by James Morgan of the University of Michigan and financed by the Ford Foundation, were published in a formidable tone called *Income and Welfare in the United States*.

These three books taken by themselves, however, lacked poignancy and failed to project the problem in human terms. The last two in particular bogged down in statistical complexities which insured that few readers could persist through to the end to uncover the messages that lay within. It remained for a book written in earnest outrage based on the author's personal record of what he saw in ghettos and slums and flophouses and tarpaper shacks to spark the intellectual revolution. This was Michael Harrington's *The Other America*.

Taken together as a quartet, the message of these studies was inescapable. For most people at the bottom of the economic ladder in the United States, the social revolution had ended. Statistics showed that the people at the bottom stayed at the bottom. And for these people, society created a "rags to rags" environment in which children were born into poverty, had their ambitions stunted by poverty, and remained in poverty regardless of the opportunities around them. Moreover, the whole

structure of social programs and social legislation tended to distribute services and benefits according to political power, not according to needs. The result — the powerless poor were left largely untouched by most programs designed to help them.

Macdonald did far more than just review four books. In this single article he laid the responsibility for action directly on the doorstep of the White House. Pointing out that federal programs to deal with poverty problems were grossly inadequate, he decried the lack of aroused public opinion and scored existing government efforts for either never reaching the real poor, or for being so middle-class oriented that they ended up hurting the people they were supposedly designed to assist. Standing back to weigh the alternatives, he crossed off indirect economic stimulation through government expenditures as ineffective in reaching hard-core poverty, and called for direct federal programs to help the poor raise their living standards.

The message got through. Walter Heller, then Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors, saw the article and clipped it out for the President's reading file. Kennedy, who had already seen a copy of Harrington's *The Other America* given him by Heller in December, was impressed. Here was a "New Frontier" — unfinished business for the administration to throw its energies into. With Kennedy's informal blessing, therefore, Hel-

ler initiated the first efforts to pull together concepts and ideas for an attack on poverty.

Thus what was only the quiet outrage of a few concerned social analysts set in motion a series of steps within the federal government in early 1963. Exploratory in nature at first, these early steps nevertheless clearly envisaged a special effort centered on the problems of the poor. The first reconnaissances in the War on Poverty began.

Action on the legislative front started to move forward with new vigor. On February 14, the President sent a Special Message on Youth to the Congress, accompanied by a new and revised version of the Youth Employment Act. This new version still contained both the Youth Conservation Corps and the Hometown Youth Employment sections, but the President had tripled the size of the proposed Youth Conservation Corps over the 1961 proposal.

The message, however, covered far more than just these two programs. It proposed the formation of a National Service Corps — a domestic counterpart to the overseas Peace Corps, which was already earning kudos for the Administration and Sargent Shriver. And it went on to recommend the expansion of the Peace Corps and Juvenile Delinquency programs, the enactment of comprehensive federal aid to education and disease eradication programs, and more money for aid to families

on welfare. For the first time, the beginnings of a comprehensive effort related to poverty started to emerge.

Congress, however, still proved a stumbling block. Opponents of the National Service Corps quickly raised a technical issue in the course of the committee debates concerning the validity of using agency appropriations to draw up plans for a program that had not even been authorized by Congress. By summer, Congressional watchdogs on Executive expenditures put a stop to all further planning for the National Service Corps by cutting off all financial support for the National Service Corps Task Force.

Congress was equally cool toward the other proposals, save for the extension of the Peace Corps. In the House Committee, the JD program had run into trouble because, after two years, it still had few successes to show. And Congresswoman Edith Green from Oregon, a dominating figure in the Committee, was deeply distressed over the adoption of the slow-moving comprehensive approach at the expense of "action" programs, which were more limited in scope and complexity but faster off the ground.

Likewise the Administration education bills were in trouble and prospects for getting general federal aid to education seemed dim. Liberals feared most of the programs would be dominated by the somewhat suspect professional educators,

with little chance for real innovation or imaginative programming. And conservatives were generally against federal aid to education because they believed federal control of public schools would follow closely on its heels.

One minor success was registered when Congress passed the Vocational Education Act of 1963. For the most part, this Act provided for grants to states to expand vocational training programs and facilities. But one section included near the end of the bill authorized the funding of five experimental residential vocational schools which would give "special consideration to the needs of large urban areas having substantial numbers of youths who have dropped out of school or are unemployed." However, Congress failed to appropriate any funds for carrying out this section, partly because no agreement could be reached as to where the five schools should be located.

And so it went for the other Administration proposals. Somehow Kennedy couldn't seem to find the key to unlock the legislative door for any social program of significant financial magnitude or which seemed to be new or innovative. Part of his problem may have stemmed from his razor-thin margin of victory over Republican Richard Nixon in the 1960 election. Some political analysts questioned whether such a slim victory could be considered mandate for major legislative initiatives. And Republicans may have felt that they had a

good chance for regaining the Presidency in 1964 if they could prevent the Democrats from building a record of accomplishments.

While Congress stifled most of Kennedy's social legislation, the library of Dickens-like descriptions of life in poor America grew. Harry Caudill's book *Night Comes to the Cumberland*s described in almost too vivid terms how a degrading and seemingly anti-human welfare system tended to break up families in eastern Kentucky. Administered through a power structure dominated by the favored few families in each rural Kentucky county, the dole seemed to eviscerate all enterprise, hope, or ambition from its recipients. And Edgar May, a Pulitzer prizewinner, told in *The Wasted Americans* what it means to be enveloped and surrounded by the ghetto. Both got wide circulation.

Within the Executive Branch, new studies added to the growing store of facts on poverty. The President's Committee on Youth Employment reported in April 1963 that youth unemployment, particularly among minority groups, was a problem of crisis proportions and would probably get worse. Already, they pointed out, well over half a million young people between sixteen and twenty-one were out of school and out of work, and that number could very well *double* by 1970. In early May, Walter Heller asked University of Wisconsin Professor Robert Lampman, one of the few econo-

mists in the United States who had focused on income distribution and poverty problems, to come to Washington for the summer to update some earlier analyses of poverty in the United States which he had prepared. In informal conversations with Heller, President Kennedy reaffirmed his hope that the federal government might mount a new initiative in the form of an attack on poverty, and Heller asked Lampman in early June to start work on developing the outlines for such an attack.

Meanwhile Heller tried to generate support for his ideas. In several speeches over the summer he stressed the problem of poverty and suggested that new efforts by the federal government were needed to erase this paradox in a land of affluence. And he also tested his ideas with other administration officials including Labor Secretary Wirtz and HEW Assistant Secretary Wilbur Cohen at a luncheon arranged in the White House dining room. The response on both fronts — quiet skepticism, and no action.

Elsewhere within the Executive Branch, however, some of the young activists most concerned with programs related to poverty started to put their heads together. These included Dave Hackett of the Juvenile Delinquency program, Dick Boone of the now defunct National Service Corps Task Force and since temporarily assigned to White House Special Projects, Bill Cannon, chief

analyst of the Budget Bureau on social legislation; and Bill Capron, Staff Director of the Council of Economic Advisors.

By September 1963, it was clear that the outlook for passage of any substantial part of the President's legislative program related to the poverty issue was nil. Lampman had finished his summer study and Bill Capron had already called together a small planning group to sift through various program possibilities.

At this time, the machinery for preparing the President's budget due to be submitted to Congress in January 1964 was already grinding away in the Budget Bureau. Though dull and prosaic for many agencies, the budget process performs one essential function in government—it forces the President and his chief advisors each year to look comprehensively at the broad scope of government operations and how it relates to national issues. Both Kennedy and his alter ego, Ted Sorensen, had quickly grasped this fact of bureaucratic life, and they had used the budget process in the past as a way of raising major issues and forcing decisions on them. Furthermore, Sorensen took a direct and personal interest in formulating the program of new legislation which the President would forward to Congress in January along with the budget. So it was natural that Sorensen would himself turn to focus on poverty as a major issue, and ask Walter Heller to collect program proposals for Presiden-

tial review. In late September, the word went out from the office of the Council of Economic Advisors to the major agencies to submit ideas for possible inclusion in a program tentatively designated "Widening Participation in Prosperity."

At this time, the opinions of the experts were in accord on only two points. First, some federal response to the Dwight Macdonalds, the Harry Caudills and the Mike Harringtons was mandatory. And second, the response would have to be given some sugar coating to destigmatize it from any connection with poverty. The voting public, the experts agreed, would never swallow a program labeled "poverty." Thus the War on Poverty started out as a "prosperity" program, and later the office which was to administer it became known as the "Economic Opportunity" office.

In retrospect, it is ironic to note how wrong this second assumption was. Experience was to prove that the concept of poverty was not only digestible, but persuasive as well. The phrases which later stirred the conscience of a nation were not euphemisms like economic opportunity, but the plain hard vocabulary of words like slums and ghettos.

The Council of Economic Advisors' call to the agencies to provide a laundry list of ideas for the "prosperity" program produced, in the words of one observer, "garbage." In part this was inevitable, since agencies submitted programs which

would naturally be assigned to them to operate; there was little impetus to think in broad terms. As a result, Heller and Budget Director Kermit Gordon came to be concerned more and more with the problem of *who* would run the poverty program as opposed to *what* would actually be done. They were both fully convinced that none of the existing agencies could be counted on to take full responsibility for coordinating the War on Poverty.

For one thing, each agency tended to look at poverty from its own rather limited vantage point. HEW viewed it as primarily a problem of education and health. In Labor, the emphasis was on jobs and manpower training. In Commerce, regional economic development stressing new business came out as the answer. And in Agriculture, rural poverty was the root of the problem.

But even more importantly, there were serious questions about the ability of the bureaucracies in these agencies to get under way fast on a national scale. Most HEW programs operated through grants to state governments, which in turn handed the money down to various local public agencies. This system was notoriously slow in reacting; moreover the concept of operating a poverty program through state governments in the South so boggled the imagination that it was quickly discarded. Some parts of the Labor Department seemed to have quick operational capability, but

somehow, even there, the fifty State Employment Services supported by funds from Labor seemed to have a monopoly on recruiting, counseling, and job placement. And the State Employment Services were held in generally low esteem in the Budget Bureau.

The problem of who could run the poverty program was complicated even further as the combined forces of Dave Hackett of the JD program, Dick Boone of the White House staff, Paul Ylvisaker of the Ford Foundation, and Bill Cannon of the Budget Bureau got to Heller to promote a new concept called "community action." This concept derived directly from the Ford Foundation-Juvenile Delinquency experience of the past two years. People are poor, they said, because they are caught up in a web of interlocking problems. This means that they need many different kinds of help, all of which must be coordinated to make sure it gets to the right people in the right combinations. And this in turn means that many different local agencies have to be involved in designing and running programs. No single existing agency in Washington or on the local scene could do the job by itself.

The issue was clear-cut. The federal government was organized largely by functional specialties and dominated by professional approaches like Education, and Labor, and Agriculture, and Welfare. Who then could run a comprehensive program de-

signed to cross-cut and interrelate many different functional specialties, bringing them to bear on people who had only one common characteristic — poverty?

On October 21, Heller again checked with President Kennedy to determine how he felt about the issue of poverty as a part of the 1964 legislative program. Heller stressed that he felt it was a potent theme, even mandatory, in order to balance the strong civil rights efforts which were already guaranteed a prominent place in the President's legislative package to be presented to the Congress in January. Again the President's reaction was clear-cut. Provided that real substance through specific programs could be formulated to underpin legislation, Kennedy wanted to move on the poverty front. The President even suggested that he himself might make a two- or three-day trip to some poverty-stricken area in order to crystallize and focus national attention on the problem. But he was still bothered, not just by the problem of *what* should be done, but of *how* it would be carried out.

Graphic evidence is at hand to prove forcefully that this issue was impressed on the mind of President Kennedy himself. At his last Cabinet meeting, held on October 29, 1963, he doodled with combined purpose and whimsicality on a pad of paper which has been preserved. Amid a sailboat and the latest price quotations on soybeans and figures

dealing with the possible exports of wheat to Russia is the word "poverty" written forcefully six times, each time circled. And in the midst of this, the word "coordination" is inscribed, underlined twice, and enclosed in a penciled box. Even in the midst of a Cabinet meeting, the restless mind of the young President turned to this issue, stripped it of the euphemistic coatings applied by his staffers, and cut through to the major problem that demanded an answer only the President could give.

Within the next three weeks, Sorensen held a special meeting in his office to discuss the organizational issues which had already become apparent. No conclusive results were achieved. And then, on the eve of Kennedy's departure for Dallas, Walter Heller checked with the President to brief him among other things on the status of the embryonic poverty program. His conclusion — there was still no real agreement on the basic direction or shape the legislative package should take. The President nevertheless re-emphasized his strong interest in laying before Congress a specific set of proposals related to the poverty issue as part of his legislative program for the next year. Heller returned to the drawing boards.

Though Heller and his associates were still struggling with the problem of giving the poverty program both structure and direction, the opening shots in the War on Poverty had already been

fired. The first skirmish was fought in eastern Kentucky and started in response to an article written by *New York Times* reporter Homer Bigart on October 20. "If you were *President* and lived on this creek, you wouldn't make enough to have gravy for breakfast," Bigart quoted a Phillip's Fork, Kentucky, farmer. Bigart went on to tell the story of poverty, squalor, and joblessness in the mountains of Appalachia. The men who were left in the small Kentucky towns were early victims of automation in the mines. Unskilled, uneducated, proud, and clannish, they both couldn't and wouldn't adjust to city life. So they lived on government handouts. But the government's support through relief came only on terms which destroyed both self-respect and self-reliance. Able-bodied men with families couldn't get relief, but their families could qualify if they deserted. So men felt pressured to leave their families; one tiny rural county totaled up more than a hundred desertions in a single year.

Meanwhile, the children were being pulled down into the same rut their parents lived in. The grossly inadequate one-room schools they went to were too isolated to take advantage of government aid programs. Students usually attended haphazardly, and many never went regularly after the third or fourth grade. For months out of the year, some families were isolated by impassable roads and just too poor to buy shoes and coats for their

children, who had to walk a dozen or more miles to get an education which by any twentieth century standard would be considered antediluvian.

And again came the allegation that local political dynasties were reinforcing their position through manipulating federal funds at the expense of the poor. "The massive doling out of Federal welfare money has financed, and now sustains, a dozen or more crafty, amoral, merciless and highly effective county-wide political machines. They thrive on the present economic malaise and are powerful because the people are helpless," Bigart concluded.

Kennedy saw the article and at once turned to Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., then Under Secretary of Commerce, asking him to come up with a comprehensive program for eastern Kentucky to get under way before winter set in. Roosevelt, together with the top Commerce Department expert on Appalachia, John Sweeney, immediately polled the Departments who might be able to make a contribution to what became known as the "East Kentucky Crash Program" and asked for immediate replies. The Labor Department, the Farmers Home Administration and Surplus Food Distribution offices in the Agriculture Department, the Public Health Service, HEW's Office of Welfare and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Commerce's Area Redevelopment Administration all came forward

with proposals that were quickly rounded into shape by Roosevelt and Sweeney, together with Byron White and Ted Sorensen.

Announcement of the crash program was delayed until the Kentucky gubernatorial election was completed, but on November 13, Governor Coombs, members of the Kentucky Congressional delegation, and several local Kentuckians met with President Kennedy and the "crash" program got under way. Over the next three months, close to \$16 million was allocated to the East Kentucky Crash Program for a kit bag of special job training, food distribution, housing, and special welfare projects. Largely in response to Caudill's criticisms of the administration of welfare funds, an ambitious program to provide money and jobs for fathers who stayed with their families was undertaken. And a kind of embryo domestic Peace Corps program utilizing college students who gave up their Christmas vacations was also funded with help from a private foundation.

Just as the Spanish Revolution was a proving ground for the weapons of World War II, the East Kentucky Crash Program was instrumental in flagging many of the problems which would be faced by the full-scale War on Poverty. For one, the programs which could get off the ground the fastest were often those about which the experts were most skeptical. The Farmers Home Administration

proved that it could quickly distribute fairly large amounts of money to poor local farmers. But no one could really guarantee that a small loan to a poor farmer to refurbish his home or farm would have any long-run effect at all; some felt that it simply bought time without alleviating the problem at all.

At the federal level, cooperation was spotty and largely dependent on finding the "right" man in an agency. This meant a man who was a "mover," and not a bureaucrat. Likewise at the state level, the cooperation of state offices proved an occasional stumbling block, despite the support of the Governor. Yet without this cooperation, some federal programs were absolutely hamstrung.

And the volunteer program quickly found that it had more talent than useful jobs which could be done. Using volunteers, the East Kentucky Crash Program proved, required a tremendous amount of organization and supervision. Volunteers could *not* be counted on to organize and define their own jobs, or supervise their own performance.

But one promising new weapon had been isolated. Through welfare, jobs had been organized for more than one thousand fathers who would otherwise have been unemployed, and whose families would otherwise have been ineligible for welfare unless the father deserted. On these jobs, the fathers worked for the equivalent of their welfare

payments, in the process of which they developed some skills, retained some work habits, and helped their own community in some small way.

So, as Air Force One and the President took off for Dallas, a legacy had already been established; there would be a national War on Poverty. In the three years since Kennedy had been elected, the country had come to look at itself with new candor, and had started to understand itself just a little better. Social critics had become aroused, and their criticism had thrust itself directly before the Presidential vision. And the chemistry of social criticism had goaded the federal government at the highest levels into re-examining its own operations and thinking about new directions for action.

What had not emerged was any consensus about *what* should be done, about *how* it should be done, or about *who* should lead it. These were to be the contributions of the Johnson administration.

4

SIX weeks later, war was declared. On January 8, 1964, President Johnson mounted the rostrum in the Chamber of the House of Representatives to deliver his first State of the Union address. "And this Administration, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America," he announced.

In fact, not much progress had been made in crystallizing the poverty program in those six weeks. In the shock and turmoil that followed the tragedy at Dallas, the new President had had all he could do to grasp the complex issues in the new budget — the first Johnson budget — and get fully briefed on the international situation.

Nevertheless the Presidential commitment was there. And it was not just halfhearted or impersonal. For on the evening of November 23, Walter Heller had discussed with the new President from Texas the work that had been done to formulate a

poverty program and asked whether the green light was still on for planning. The President replied conclusively that this was his kind of program, and directed the Budget Bureau to provide for a special budget allocation of \$500 million to be available for poverty programs to be developed over the next few months.

In his State of the Union address, President Johnson went on to describe some of the facets which the War on Poverty must embody: A community approach with cooperation among federal, state, and local governments and citizenry, an oblique reference to the Community Action concept. A special effort to develop Appalachia and other depressed areas. New legislation for youth employment, but with no specific reference to the previously proposed Youth Conservation Corps. Expanded food distribution. Enactment of the National Service Corps. And then a host of other changes in unemployment insurance, minimum wages, aid to education, health insurance, urban renewal, and tax rates. But, though the right words were all there, they were not assembled in any clear order; there was no commitment to any set of priorities, nor to any organizational structure. Nor was there any hint of the omnibus package that was yet to come.

Among key Presidential advisors, the arguments about organization still continued, with Budget Director Kermit Gordon, Walter Heller, and Su-

preme Court Justice-to-be Abe Fortas all arguing for a new agency with a separate director. Without this independence, they argued, the chances for making major innovations were small, and the existing bureaucracies and professional biases would stifle what the President wanted to do. On the other hand, Cabinet officers, like Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz and other senior officials in operating Departments, argued strongly that the only way to get under way fast was to work through existing agencies who had the expertise. They wanted to see some sort of general coordinating mechanisms set up — a Special Assistant to the President or a Committee in the Executive Office of the President which would only carry out studies and set overall goals and guidelines.

Thus, in mid-January, the Administration had made its declaration of war, but still had to work out its strategy; it had made its commitment to Congress and the public with an election only ten months off, but it had no organization; and it had described some of its goals, but had few specific programs to support them. The need for a commanding general was crying—and in Sargent Shriver the President found him.

At the time, Shriver was on a trip to the Middle East bearing a special message from the President to the Pope, to be delivered to the Holy Pontiff while he was visiting Jerusalem. However, the man the President relied on most for advice on

matters such as this was Bill Moyers, his Special Assistant in the White House. More than anyone else, Moyers was at the President's side, had his confidence, knew what the President wanted almost without the President ever having to articulate it. And Moyers was also extremely close to Shriver. When the Peace Corps was being set up in 1961, then Vice-President Johnson had recommended Moyers to Shriver, who hired him as one of the key members of the top Peace Corps team. Moyers and Shriver hit it off beautifully and developed an extremely close working relationship. In fact, in the summer of 1963, Shriver had taken the courageous step of proposing Moyers for number two man in the Peace Corps agency, even though he had yet to reach his thirtieth birthday. The position was a Presidential appointment requiring confirmation by the Senate, but Moyers breezed through the confirmation smoothly. On the day of the assassination, Moyers immediately moved to the White House, though he still maintained a warm spot in his heart for the Peace Corps and Shriver.

Though Moyers was undoubtedly pivotal in the President's decision to ask Shriver to take charge of the poverty program, Shriver was too obvious a candidate not to have been seriously considered on his own merits.

Shriver had a lustrous reputation on Capitol Hill as a master salesman, based on his success in get-

ting the Peace Corps legislation passed. In 1961, he had gone to see every single Congressman and every single Senator to tell the Peace Corps story, a Herculean task considering that more than five hundred individual conferences were required. This step alone had endeared him to many possible opponents, who thereafter voted for the program largely because it was run by a man they could not help liking and respecting. The President must have sensed that getting the poverty bill passed would take a masterful effort backed by unflagging energy and overwhelming persuasiveness. Shriver had these qualities.

Shriver also had a suitable background. He had run the Merchandise Mart in Chicago, which helped make him acceptable to the business community. But he also was extremely active on the Chicago School Board. The poverty program would need someone who could mobilize national support from universities, from religious groups, from civil rights groups, and from the general public. Shriver had already proved that he had great charm, if not absolute wizardry, in winning the support of these groups for the Peace Corps. There was reason to believe he could do the same for the poverty program.

Furthermore, the poverty program would need someone who could get projects into action fast, yet with a practical sense of what kinds of things would work, and what wouldn't. Shriver was a

man of action, with little patience for pilot programs or demonstration projects. His administration of the Peace Corps was regarded as something just short of miraculous. Cynics who had called it a "Kiddie Corps" in ridicule just two years before had now joined the ranks of those who were praising it as the greatest innovation of the Kennedy administration.

And last of all, Shriver was part of the Kennedy family but didn't have the Kennedy name. He provided just enough, but not too much, continuity with the past.

Shriver was, in fact, the perfect choice. And so it was that, on his return from the Middle East, he was asked to come to the White House immediately to see the President. The meeting took place on Saturday, February 1, and lasted less than an hour. The President impressed on Shriver the need to develop plans which could be pressed into action rapidly — which would produce some visible results quickly. On both organizational and program structure he was given a free hand to come up with whatever recommendations seemed most sound and salable. Shriver suggested half a dozen other men whom he thought could do the job better. But the President knew that no one else could touch Shriver's qualifications for getting the poverty program through Congress.

Shriver lost no time in tearing into his new assignment. The next evening, Sunday, Kermit Gor-

don, Director of the Budget Bureau, Walter Heller, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, and Adam Yarmolinsky, from the Defense Department staff and one of Kennedy's trusted idea men from the 1960 campaign, met at Shriver's house in Maryland. Heller and Gordon outlined the present status of thinking. First, there was the \$500 million contingency fund in the budget tentatively slotted against the amorphous community action concept. But Gordon also mentioned the possibility of melding an additional \$140 million into the poverty program which was tentatively programmed in the Office of Education budget for "Special Education Projects." Beyond this, the first meeting simply served to brief the newly appointed commander-in-chief on the developments up to this point, and some of the thinking behind them.

By Tuesday, Shriver had organized an all-day session attended by an amazing spectrum of personalities, representing many different points of view. The "experts" were there in force. From the world of economics came Walter Heller and his aide, Bill Capron, Harvard economist and U.S. Ambassador to India John Kenneth Galbraith, and Charles Schultze, Assistant Director of the Budget Bureau and one of the country's outstanding public finance specialists. Social analysts within government were represented by Dick Boone, Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who later authored the controversial

Moynihan Report on Negro family structure, and Wilbur Cohen, one of the authors of the 1962 University of Michigan study on income and welfare, now an Assistant Secretary at HEW. From outside the government came several social critics: Mike Harrington, the author of *The Other America*; the Ford Foundation's Paul Ylvisaker; and Paul Jacobs of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.

The business viewpoint was represented by Don Petrie of Avis Rent-A-Car and Virgil Martin, president of Carson, Pirie, Scott of Chicago, a firm which was already running a successful job placement project for high school dropouts. Lane Kirkland from the AFL-CIO was there, too, along with several people who were respected and intelligent observers of social problems. These included Morris Abrams, a Phi Beta Kappa Rhodes Scholar from Atlanta interested in problems of discrimination and equal opportunity, Dick Goodwin, President Kennedy's main speech-writer and expert on Latin America, and Adam Yarmolinsky. From the university scene came James Dixon, president of Antioch College.

Also present were John Baker and Jim Sundquist, two of the Agriculture Department's top experts in rural problems, and Arthur Naftalin, Mayor of Minneapolis, with an outstanding reputation for effective city government, as well as Norbert Schlei, a Justice Department legal expert

who was soon to take charge of drafting the legislation, and Frank Mankiewicz, a trusted Shriver Peace Corps associate just back from Latin America.

The results of this all-day session — general agreement on the philosophy which should be adopted. First, emphasize the concept of individual economic independence, of helping poor people become self-supporting through developing work skills, jobs, and basic education. Second, build around the theory that most poverty is cyclical. People are poor because they are born into poor families, never have a fair chance to break out during their childhood and youth, and therefore marry and bear more children into poverty. This means designing programs that will *break* the cycle of poverty. And lastly, focus on young people, because the chances of success are greatest in this group.

In real terms, the conferees also pinpointed certain kinds of target groups at which specific kinds of programs should be aimed. Willard Wirtz, Secretary of Labor, had just submitted a report to the President from the President's Task Force on Manpower Conservation, which showed that, across the country, one third of the eighteen-year-old men could not meet the basic physical or mental standards for entrance into the Armed Forces. The report went on to state categorically that "a major proportion of these young men are the products of

poverty. They have inherited their situation from their parents, and unless the cycle is broken, they will almost surely transmit it to their children." Wirtz and General Lewis Hershey of the Selective Service System were already working on plans for testing all eligible eighteen-year-olds to determine which of these could not meet Armed Forces requirements. Since Armed Forces mental requirements were keyed to an approximate eighth-grade level, the advocates of universal testing argued that this would classify by name and address an immense group of young men who couldn't qualify for a decent job either, and therefore were doomed to stay in the poverty cycle.

The Budget Bureau, on the other hand, was frankly skeptical. Why go to all the work of identifying these problem cases when there was little assurance that any of them would get any help or remedial work related to their deficiencies? Perhaps the poverty program could fill this void.

The conferees also discussed the school dropout problem. Statistics showed that close to three quarters of a million youngsters dropped out of school every year before they got a diploma. Across the country, one out of every six school dropouts was unemployed. But in some big city slums, the data showed that more than half of the out-of-school teen-agers were out of work. It didn't take much analysis to conclude that the outlook for a decent future for a high school dropout in a

highly technical society was grim; yet one out of every four young people coming into the labor force didn't have a high school diploma. Somehow, it was agreed, the poverty program must attack this situation.

The list of possible target groups went on — dependent mothers who headed broken families, pre-school children, rural farmers, intellectually capable students from poor families who never got a chance to get to college.

All these were quickly tabulated, and Yarmolinsky, acting as scribe for the meeting, immediately assigned departments to prepare additional backup materials and program proposals related to these topics. Jobs and job training programs were to be developed by Labor; an attack on educational and health problems to be drafted by HEW; special work-study and volunteer programs together with the still popular Community Action concept to be assigned to Dick Boone and Paul Ylvisaker; special programs for rural areas to be planned by the Agriculture Department; and the Budget Bureau was to develop some overall organizational plans for the poverty administration.

Out of all this came one other important realization — that the poverty program would have to combine a variety of different kinds of projects focused on different kinds of target groups and using different administrative approaches. This early realization was substantively correct — poverty is

an extremely complex problem which affects different kinds of people in different ways. No single approach can work effectively to handle all the different faces poverty presents.

But it was also politically fortuitous. For in variety there is a chance to give many different groups a role. And from giving many different groups a role, there comes broad support. And from broad support, there comes the chance to wield the political strength necessary to pass legislation. The legislative strategists quickly grasped this fundamental fact of life, and out of this came the decision to package the poverty program in one single bill. The persuasiveness of this logic with respect to this particular program with this particular Congress at this particular time was so overwhelming that it was not even hotly debated. Everyone seemed to know that a series of individual bills would have little chance for passage before the November election. That would leave the President's declaration in his State of the Union address as little more than words, and embarrassing ones at that.

The omnibus move was also attractive from a budgetary standpoint. The President's budget had included only \$500 million for starting the War on Poverty. But funds were also provided in the budget for other programs that could be brought under the poverty umbrella, thereby enlarging the funds available for distribution.

In the President's budget, \$160 million had been allocated to the Youth Conservation Corps–Hometown Youth Employment Program which had been pending on Capitol Hill since 1961. Shriver had reacted negatively to the Youth Conservation Corps concept when he first heard about it — largely out of intuition and an innate distrust of the conservation agency bureaucracies whom he felt would control it. As a man always searching for major new breakthroughs, however, he had been frankly excited by one idea thrown out in the course of the February 4 meeting — urban boarding schools to enroll high school dropouts whose family and community environment made it nearly impossible to help them while they lived at home. Shriver had seen cases like this himself in the Lawndale section of Chicago, where children were literally locked out of their houses all day while their parents both worked — or slept off a binge. Though this idea was remarkably similar to the residential vocational schools included in the Vocational Education Act of 1963, it actually came from a different quarter. After the Sunday night meeting, Adam Yarmolinsky had discussed the poverty program briefly with Defense Secretary McNamara. Between the two of them, the concept of using some obsolete military camps and the resources of the Defense Department to operate large-scale training centers was generated.

Since the poverty program was clearly develop-

ing an educational and human resources focus, the Budget Bureau suggested, with the concurrence of HEW, that amounts budgeted for a College Work-Study program (\$22.5 million), and for Special Educational projects (\$140 million), both be folded into the poverty program. Frank Keppel, then Commissioner of Education, knew that he had little chance of getting these activities approved by Congress this session, and was therefore ready to give them up in return for assurance that the Office of Education would be given an important role in developing educational programs under Community Action.

An additional \$50 million was added to the poverty budget from another HEW program designed to provide jobs and training on a national scale for welfare recipients along the lines of the East Kentucky Crash Program. And the Commerce Department's Appalachian program request contained \$35 million for human resources development that was also readily shifted to the poverty program in order to keep the two efforts clearly delineated — the Appalachian program focusing on physical development of roads and community systems like water and sewage, and the poverty program on education and health and other "people-oriented" activities. And finally, the Budget Bureau identified \$55 million from the special contingencies allowance in the budget, which could be made available if necessary. It was.

As a result of these increments, the poverty program quickly grew from its initial allocation of just \$500 million in early February to a grand total of \$962.5 million, enough to fund a much more ambitious start. Moreover, Shriver had made practically no limiting commitments in return for the budgetary largesse that had been heaped upon him. In fact, he had nearly a billion dollars to allocate as he saw fit among a variety of different programs, together with substantial power stemming from the President himself to reshape those programs as he wanted.

As Shriver pondered and talked about what quickly became the Youth Conservation Corps—Urban Boarding School section of the bill, he began to see new advantages to this particular section. For one thing, he was extremely mindful of the President's directive to come up with programs that would produce visible results quickly. Regardless of the Presidential admonition, Shriver was keenly aware of this need. In his mind, the popular conception that poor people really couldn't change, and perhaps didn't even want to better themselves, had to be killed quickly and decisively. There had to be some part of the program which could get off the ground quickly, concentrate large amounts of services on specific people, and clearly demonstrate that they wanted this opportunity and would make the best of it.

Shriver was also skeptical of the Community Ac-

tion program from the beginning. It smacked too much of words for which he had little use, like "co-ordinated approaches" and "comprehensive planning." Furthermore, the success of Community Action clearly depended on working *through* local power structures and *with* the established local agencies. Shriver felt that the capacity of these organs to mount really imaginative new programs on a broad scale was limited. He foresaw that Community Action was likely to get bogged down in many places in local rivalries; it clearly could not be counted on to produce early results, although it probably was the key to long-term success.

The only other major program which might conceivably produce quick results was HEW's proposed expansion of the Eastern Kentucky Area program. But Shriver had been unimpressed with HEW's ability to come up with practical programs or even useful base statistics to support this undertaking. And the control of welfare funds was securely lodged by statute in the hands of the states. Unless a state enthusiastically wanted to cooperate — a dubious assumption among the southeastern states where 40 percent of the nation's poor were concentrated — there was little the federal government could do to get action going.

So the major initiative had to come in the program aimed at teen-agers — the dropouts and the draft rejectees — and among these, the new urban

boarding school concept seemed to have the greatest potential. Mindful of how quickly the Civilian Conservation Corps had gotten under way in the 1930's with the help of the military cadres assigned to the centers, Shriver came to rely on this segment of the program to produce the necessary early successes.

The urban boarding school idea had other advantages. Shriver felt strongly that some part of the poverty program must have the capacity to reach into every single county and town with at least some small impact. Otherwise there might be pockets of people who would be left completely unaffected, either because they were too isolated, or because local agencies and government frustrated their efforts to take advantage of its possibilities.

The new urban boarding school concept seemed tailor-made to fit this bill. Its recruitment would have to be nationwide. High school dropouts and draft rejectees might be concentrated in some parts of the country more than others, but county-by-county statistics showed that just about every county in the country had dropouts who might be eligible. With national recruitment and national selection, here was one program that could be run so as to reach every single county in every single state.

Now, however, it had to be packaged right. It had to be given the right push in the right direc-

tion so it would be salable as a national product consistent with the underlying economic independence philosophy of the program. Task Force staff had been searching for a name for the new program, since Youth Conservation Corps failed to describe the new concept adequately, and sounded too much like social do-goodism. The roster of proposed names grew long — American Youth Corps, Youth Opportunity Corps, National Youth Corps, Opportunities for Young Americans, National Training Corps, etc. Sitting around Shriver's office one evening the fourth week in February, the list was tabled. Shriver glanced at it and winced. "Nuts," he said. "Let's call it the Job Corps. That's what these kids are really interested in — a job."

The staffers around the table winced — and groaned. Job Corps. It had no ring to it. Not like Peace Corps. It didn't sound right; it didn't even say anything about who was to get in. But Shriver got more enthusiastic as everyone else argued against him — and he prevailed.

By the time the Job Corps was named, the brash competition among government agencies for pre-eminence in its direction had already begun. The first round was won hands down by the Defense Department. And logically so. For the last-minute addition of the residential training school to the picture meant that an immense amount of planning had to be done in an incredibly short period of time. Neither the Labor Department nor HEW

had the broad logistics systems, personnel cadre, or disciplined nationwide organization that would be needed to get the Job Corps under way. The Defense Department had all these. And it also had a great deal of professional training expertise. After all, the Armed Forces are the biggest single training institution in the world.

Within a couple of days after the February 4 meeting, "think" papers were already circulating in DOD, anticipating, as one of them stated, that "The Department of Defense will administer the program under the policy direction and supervision of the Assistant to the President for Poverty Programs. Within Defense, the Department of the Army will be the Executive Agent for conduct of the program, with Assistant Secretary of Defense [Manpower] as the monitoring staff agency. The Army will appoint a civilian Youth Corps Director, who will get policy guidance on the training program from the Assistant to the President for Poverty Programs. Under the Youth Corps Director will be three major functions, one covering examination, classification, processing, and staging; a second responsible for operation of the educational-vocational camps at Army installations; and a third responsible for the operation of the smaller camps for conservation projects and literacy training. Under each of these functions, there will be major contributions from other government agencies, but the overall administration, coordination, and dis-

bursement of appropriations will be handled within the Defense Department under policy guidelines established by the Assistant to the President for Poverty Programs.”

Even within the Defense Department, some staff members were leery of Defense’s assuming such a primordial role. By the twelfth of February, one staffer had registered his views in writing. Giving Defense such a predominant role would “scare the hell out of a substantial number of liberals” he said. The principal fear — that the Administration would be charged with intentions to draft drop-outs into a militaristic society totally regimented according to Washington directives.

A week later, the first major issue of the poverty program — who would run the Job Corps — hit the papers. Evans and Novak, syndicated columnists who specialize in disclosing internal government clashes, devoted an entire column to the uproar that had been created by plans to give the Defense Department operational control over the major youth program in the poverty package. Liberal opinion, whose wholehearted support was clearly necessary for passage of the poverty bill, was aroused.

Simultaneously with the appearance of the Evans and Novak article, the initial DOD proposal for the “National Youth Corps” was forwarded to the Poverty Task Force. A week later, new directions and planning assumptions were passed back

to DOD. The target — 40,000 enrollees on board by June 30, 1966, and 100,000 by the following June. Assume legislation and money to start operations beginning June 30, 1964. Start the input of enrollees by mid-September. Plan for seven large training centers to be located on unused military bases, and one hundred 200-man conservation centers to be in operation by the end of the first year. But most important of all, *assume that civilian personnel will be utilized exclusively in the educational aspects of the program.*

Two weeks later, on March 10, the “Suggested Job Corps Program and Operations” plan submitted to the Task Force by DOD reflected a radical change in thinking about the role of the military. Defense’s role under the new plan was cut back to logistical support and administrative backup. A major part of the new plan was devoted to the problem of finding qualified civilian staff to carry out the twenty-four-hour-a-day programs envisaged at the large training centers. Civilians were clearly back in the saddle, with both policy and operational control.

The warning signals flashed by those who were wary of Defense Department control of the Job Corps were almost certainly justified. Congress would not have passed a Job Corps operated by the Defense Department, because it was flatly opposed to involving the military in social action programs. Late the same spring, Defense Secretary

McNamara himself proposed a very modest and well-thought-out program to give intensive remedial training and minor physical remediation to would-be Armed Forces volunteers who just barely failed to meet the Armed Forces entrance requirements. The theory seemed sound — a highly motivated volunteer, even though he needs some special help to qualify, will make a better soldier than a reluctant draftee. But Congress turned McNamara down cold in 1964, and again in 1965. Only in the summer of 1966, when draft calls had been radically increased, did Congress open the door to McNamara's uplift program.

Though the cutback in the role of the military was clearly dictated by political necessity, this step transferred a fantastic planning burden back to the Poverty Task Force. Just staffing the proposed seven large training centers would require more than three thousand people with an enormous spectrum of skills. Molding these three thousand people into operating staffs and designing programs and administrative procedures to handle the complexities of operating seven residential centers holding twenty thousand high school dropouts was a formidable task. To handle this assignment, the Job Corps Task Force, in mid-March, had two junior staff members, no budget, and no legislative authority.

Thus it was that, as Sargent Shriver faced the House Education and Labor Subcommittee on St.

Patrick's Day, 1964, to kick off five weeks of tumultuous hearings, no one really knew how the large training centers would be run. Shriver's narrative presentation to Congress of poverty program plans was appropriately evasive. Devoting only eight pages to a description of the proposed Job Corps, the introduction clearly stated: "Although the details of operation require further study, the following reflects current thinking on the subject." While outlining the concept of intensive vocational and job training to be offered at the training centers, the presentation failed to mention who would be responsible for operating them.

While the plans for Job Corps that were laid before Congress may have been vague in operational detail, several basic concepts and philosophies did emerge in the course of the testimony. Shriver, in his opening statement before the Committee, stated that "the separate sections of this bill . . . form a careful pattern in which different groups in the population are given the opportunity that best suits their needs." Within this pattern, the Job Corps was clearly being targeted not at poor teenagers in general, but at the bottom end of the spectrum of poor teenagers. President Johnson's March 16 message to Congress which accompanied the proposed legislation said the Job Corps would enroll "those whose background, health, and education make them least fit for useful work." Shriver's written presentation described Job Corps

enrollees as “young men [who] cannot be helped best in programs located within their own communities,” and as young people who “must come a long way.” On the other hand, the community-based Neighborhood Youth Corps was aimed at teen-agers who “can benefit from it in their home environments.” And the College Work-Study program was clearly aimed at the upper crust of the poor, those who had already graduated from high school and had the intelligence, but not the funds, to go on to college.

Secondly, the program would be entirely non-military in character and operation. Shriver and the Administration stressed the fact that enrollment in the Job Corps would be purely voluntary; no one would be drafted into it or sent to a center against his wishes. Moreover, once enrolled, a Job Corpsman could resign at any time. There would be no standard tour of enlistment to be completed. Secretary McNamara set the tone for Job Corps camp operation clearly when he stated before the House Committee: “These are civilian, not military camps. They are designed to fit men for participation in our civilian society, not for participation in our military forces. Therefore, I think it is quite appropriate that a civilian agency and not a military agency be in charge of the camps.”

Thirdly, recognizing the character of the intake population, planners envisaged a comprehensive program in each center utilizing new techniques

and materials. Job Corps plans clearly disclosed not just a willingness to innovate, but a conviction that the traditional style of plain old book-learning wouldn't work. In discussing the Job Corps, the President said in his message: "These are not simply camps for the underprivileged. They are new educational institutions, comparable in innovation to the land-grant colleges."

Fourthly, the concept of two identifiably different but related types of centers was firmly expressed in program designs. Planners assumed that enrollees coming into the Corps would have a broad range of educational, attitudinal, and physical deficiencies, especially those who came from the *most* disadvantaged segment of the spectrum of disadvantaged youth. Some would enter Job Corps ready to go into prevocational or vocational training, even though they had not graduated from high school. Others would come in illiterate. Some would come in at age sixteen; some at age twenty-one. Some would come in with serious attitudinal problems toward other races, or toward authority; others would simply be poor kids who never had much of a chance.

The plans laid before Congress envisaged a hundred or more conservation centers, which would be operated by the Agriculture and Interior Departments and located on government-owned land, such as national parks and forests. Conservation centers would be small, with capacities varying

from around a hundred youths up to two hundred or so. Moreover, most conservation centers would probably be fairly isolated from major centers of population, and therefore from access to other educational and training resources. Taking both their small size and isolation into account, it was clear that conservation center programs would generally have to stress activities which did not require fancy and expensive training equipment or high-priced, highly educated specialists.

Therefore conservation centers were designed as a kind of basic education and training *cum* work experience operation. Enrollees assigned to conservation centers would be those with the most severe educational gaps, and those otherwise least ready for vocational training. While at a conservation center, enrollees would develop their basic educational skills — such as reading and counting — and at the same time get a rounded living experience, which would help them learn how to cooperate and get along in society. In addition, half or more of their time would be spent in carrying out various conservation projects, through which they would learn how to use simple tools, how to operate motorized equipment, and how to lay out and plan a work project.

In addition to these small conservation centers, there was also to be a system of large residential vocational training schools to be set up on military bases. The Administration's plans clearly envis-

aged these as more advanced institutions — ones to which an enrollee from a conservation center might “graduate.” Here the emphasis would be placed overwhelmingly on job training, with only just enough basic education to fill in what small deficiencies might remain in those more advanced enrollees who would be assigned. Otherwise, the Corpsman’s time would be spent primarily in classes such as automotive repair, welding and sheet-metal work, electrical repair, simple book-keeping, or gas station operating. The aim of these large centers would be to turn out young men ready to go on to a job at the apprentice or beginner level, or to go on to more advanced training in a regular vocational school.

Though Job Corps conservation center plans looked at first glance as though they were a direct and unmodified carry-over from the Civilian Conservation Corps camps of the 1930’s and Humphrey’s Youth Conservation Corps proposals, a subtle but important change occurred when the Poverty Task Force planners took the reins.

During the latter years of the Civilian Conservation Corps, open disagreements abounded between conservationists and youth workers over the relative balance and emphasis in the program between conservation work for the public good, and education and training for the benefit of the youth enrolled. Conrad Wirth, Interior’s representative on the CCC Advisory Council and later Director

of the National Park Service, emphasized this conflict clearly in his final wrap-up evaluation of the CCC submitted to Secretary Harold Ickes in 1944. "While the CCC," he wrote, "did give employment to many boys, it was overemphasized by some persons as a program to take youth out of the streets. This fact led many to believe that only those in very poor circumstances or those of low mental or even of low moral status were eligible for enrollment in the Corps. The CCC was looked on by many as a relief program rather than a conservation program. A good conservation program can do much toward the relief of the unemployed, but its main objective should never be thought of as relief." And later in the report he broadened this point by saying that "the trend to build up a school-room type of educational program and impractical (and unpopular) academic courses in the camps caused a conflict in the understanding of the purposes of the Corps."

Fifteen years later, testifying on the Humphrey Youth Conservation Corps Bill, Wirth reiterated the dilemma: "The thing you are constantly confronted with, that we were confronted with and would be again no doubt, would be: Which takes precedence, when you get a boy that age, his education or his work? The old pendulum swings back and forth. . . ." Wirth stated the issue lucidly: Is this a program to help trees or kids?

While the Youth Conservation Corps was pend-

ing before Congress, the pendulum clearly had swung to the side of those who wanted to place primary emphasis on trees. Even as late as February 1963, just a year before the Poverty Task Force was organized, Secretary Udall had testified that "it would be a mistake to have this program [the Youth Conservation Corps] be a dropout program. The dropouts are part of it, but I think a lot of these youngsters just simply don't have money or for any reason cannot go on to college or could not stay in high school. Therefore, I think they have to want to go into a program. They have to be anxious to try it out in order to get something out of this, and I think if this approach is used that you will find youngsters that are able to and very willing to do projects of this kind." To Udall, the primary qualifications for entry into the YCC should have been "the fact that they are unemployed and they are anxious and willing to get into a program of this kind."

Though several exponents for emphasizing the youth-helping aspects of the program testified, even Attorney General Kennedy, who was as concerned as anyone about teen-age unemployment and delinquency, admitted several days after Udall's testimony that the Youth Conservation Corps plans foresaw that enrollees would spend thirty to thirty-five hours a week working and only ten hours being trained and educated.

But when the Poverty Task Force under Shriver

took over, the pendulum swung rapidly back to the advocates who gave kids priority over trees. There was never any question but that the Job Corps was a program designed primarily to solve the nation's youth problem; any conservation work accomplished in the process was simply an incidental benefit — a by-product subsidiary to the main task. In fact, although Interior Secretary Udall and Agriculture Secretary Freeman made strong pitches for the conservation benefits of the program in their testimony for the poverty bill, not one of the major lobby groups for conservation work — like the National Wildlife Federation, the Izaak Walton League, the National Parks Association, the Wilderness Society, or the Citizens Committee on Natural Resources — was called to the stand. Yet all had been prime witnesses for the Youth Conservation Corps proposals.

Needless to say, they were nevertheless keeping a close watch on what was happening to the program they had been steadfastly supporting for the past five years — and they didn't like what they saw. By March 20, they had already made it clear to their contacts in the Labor Department that they were unhappy at being left out of the planning for the new poverty bill. This word was quietly passed to Shriver, along with the explicit footnote that the conservationists could bring in as many as twenty Republican votes in the House —

and that leaving them unhappy could definitely cause the poverty bill trouble in what was always expected to be a tough fight on the floor of the House of Representatives.

The conservationists received yet another blow when Shriver, with great fanfare, announced on March 25 that Vernon Alden, president of the University of Ohio, would take charge of the subgroup drawing up the detailed Job Corps program plans. Alden had exactly the kind of background that Shriver thought could help to put the program across. As a former member of the faculty at the Harvard Business School, he had credentials which would appeal to businessmen. He was also a member of the Young Presidents Club — an organization of men who have made it to the top fast. But most important, he was the president of a university. Shriver felt that the major danger to the Job Corps was a frontal attack coming from professional educators through the National Education Association and the Association of State School Superintendents. The Job Corps, in fact, looked suspiciously like a federally operated public school system that would compete directly with — and perhaps show up — local school systems in every county across the country. But, Shriver opined, such an attack would be unlikely if a man with education credentials were heading up the planning. As a university president, Vernon Alden

had credentials that would put him in an ideal position to defend against an attack coming from this direction.

Shortly after Alden started on the job, Spencer Smith of the Citizens Committee on Natural Resources met with him and a couple of his staff members to size up the situation. Early in April, Yarmolinsky got the feedback from that meeting. The conservationists were clearly still upset. After five years of uphill fighting in support of the Youth Conservation Corps, they felt the Task Force for the War on Poverty had scrapped their ideas without even consulting them. The new Job Corps legislation contained only a passing reference to conservation work, and absolutely no assurance that *any* trainees would be working on natural resources preservation and improvement. Alden didn't seem to know very much about the federal bureaus most concerned with conservation, like the Forest Service and the Bureau of Reclamation. Nor did Alden convince Spencer Smith that he had any real commitment to the concept of conservation.

But this was not the end of the woes of the Job Corps as the Congressional hearings got under way. Shriver's first day of testimony was hardly more than a few minutes old when he suddenly found himself with a brand-new and totally unexpected facet added to a program already beset with imposing administrative challenges and phil-

osophical crosscurrents. Congresswoman Edith Green, the "Gentlelady from Oregon," as she was often denominated by Committee Chairman Adam Clayton Powell, demanded of Shriver why girls and young women were excluded from the Job Corps. The poverty planners had never even seriously debated starting a residential program for girls, and the Administration's bill clearly limited the Job Corps to "male individuals."

The "Gentlelady from Oregon" has a well-known reputation for being anything but gentle. In fact, she is known as a hard-working, very intelligent, and highly effective spokesman and fighter for what she perceives as right. Many of her fellow committee members stood in awe of her sharp tongue, and few would stand up against her in a one-to-one debate. As one fellow committee member described her, "She is the only woman I know who has been going through menopause for forty years."

Shriver immediately sensed that winning a fight against Mrs. Green on this point would be extremely difficult, especially since there was really no good substantive reason for not having Job Corps residential centers for women. So he quickly indicated his willingness to accept an amendment to admit girls into the Job Corps program. Mrs. Green pressed to have as many as one third of the enrollees be young women on the rationale that one third of the labor force consists of females. But

Shriver demurred from any such commitment, saying that the program should "try not to do the maximum, but to do the maximum that is practical and workable in the first year." Mrs. Green pressed her point with later Administration witnesses, and by the first week of hearings she had an ironbound commitment to open up the Job Corps to women—who would, of course, live in separate centers apart from the young men.

This turn of events placed another prodigious planning burden on the fledgling Job Corps program. Behind the men's conservation centers lay five years of concentrated planning. The new men's training center program had no such head start, to be sure, but the last three or four years had seen a great deal of attention focused on the problem of juvenile delinquency—almost exclusively translated to mean young males. But practically no one had paid any attention to young disadvantaged girls. There was no body of experts anyone could turn to for sound advice and reliable program design. Yet it was clear after only a few minutes of thinking that women would need a completely different kind of program from the Job Corps men. Job Corps women would aspire to different kinds of jobs, and would also have to get training in homemaking and other sorts of skills that men wouldn't get at their centers. In fact, adding women to the Job Corps imposed a re-

quirement to start from scratch and design a completely new program.

By the early days of April 1964, only twelve weeks had passed since President Johnson had declared war on poverty as a main plank of his administration. Yet incredible progress had been made in those twelve weeks in molding a program out of an idea. Sargent Shriver had been selected as generalissimo. Under his direction, dozens of program ideas had been sifted, most of which had been proposed to Congress several times previously in various forms. The most promising of these were then shaped and reshaped into a package—an omnibus poverty bill—designed, as it were, with a little something to please everybody.

But the Job Corps had also run into early trouble. The conservationists, one of the major lobby groups whose support was needed, had been antagonized to the point of hostility. Early plans to use the Defense Department organization to get the program off the ground in a hurry—just as the Army had done thirty years before with the Civilian Conservation Corps—had to be scuttled, and the Poverty Task Force as yet had no alternative way of filling in this gap. On top of this, Congress appeared certain to impose a new requirement to open the Job Corps up to young women, and no one had even started to worry this problem through, though its complexities were vast. Yet

Shriver was counting on the Job Corps to produce quick and visible results to prove to the country that the poverty program would work.

In short, the array of problems which faced Vern Alden as he agreed to take over the responsibility for building a program out of these emerging concepts was terrifying.

5

BY the end of the third week in April, Shriver already had two proposals that would help solve part of the Job Corps problem — how to get the large residential training centers under way and running. One of the proposals came from Vern Alden, the head of the Job Corps planning group. His idea — sign universities up to contracts to run major parts of the large Job Corps centers. Alden described the arrangement this way to the House Education and Labor Committee on April 28.

Let us say a job training center was set up at Camp Kilmer next to New Brunswick, New Jersey, and we developed a prime contract with Rutgers University. We would say to the people at Rutgers, “We will deliver 2,000 people at Camp Kilmer on such a date. We will take responsibility for housing, clothing and feeding these people. We will give you the re-

sponsibility for developing a new educational program which would include supervision of work, physical fitness and basic education and vocational education. You would have the responsibility for developing the basic materials although you can avail yourself of materials developed by Zacharias of MIT, and people working closely with Frank Keppel and with others. You would recruit people on your own faculty on a part- or full-time basis. You will avail yourselves of the rich resources of the teachers, colleges, and other educational institutions in New Jersey. You will avail yourself of people in the secondary school system, maybe people who are retired teachers, maybe people who have retired from the service at the age of 45 and are productive and have ideas. You will pull in social service workers, returning Peace Corps volunteers, even alumni of Job Corps, and develop an imaginative, creative, new educational program.

Perhaps the most critical words in this entire illustration are the last three — “new educational program.” For the idea of contracting with universities to run Job Corps centers rested on the proposition that the problem of remolding Job Corps enrollees was essentially an educational problem — therefore educational institutions should design and run the program.

But from an entirely different — and unexpected — direction came a different proposal: go to some of the large corporations that had designed and managed some of the Defense Department's most complex systems and ask them to design and run Job Corps training centers.

This idea originated in the mind of one of the most unusual members of the Poverty Task Force — John Rubel, vice-president of Litton Industries, and previously Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Development. Rubel joined the Task Force with an assignment to pull together ways of getting industry directly involved in the poverty program. By early March, Rubel and his working partner, Dave Young, Director of Long Range Planning for Aerojet General Corporation, were scouring the country for ideas, talking to businessmen from New York to Los Angeles.

For several weeks after he arrived, Rubel was regarded with questioning glances and raised eyebrows by many Task Force members. A man with an incredibly fertile mind and restless curiosity, his conversations often left others either bedazzled with the breadth of his knowledge, or uncertain as to what on earth he was trying to say. Somehow he seemed to take ideas and put them together differently from anyone else; out of this process often came entirely new approaches or insights into the real nature of a problem.

On the surface, Rubel's idea of going to business

to run Job Corps centers might seem to have been just another alternative to Alden's proposal to contract with universities. But this was not the case. Rubel's proposal was based on a fundamentally different conception of what the Job Corps problem was and what had to be done in order to solve it.

Rubel reasoned that the poverty program, in undertaking the Job Corps in the mid-1960's, was in much the same position that the Space Agency was in the late 1950's, when it was decided to put a man on the moon. At that time, no one knew exactly what techniques we were going to use. In fact, in order to find out the best technique, highly specialized research would have to be carried out and evaluated — research which had to be consciously planned and coordinated. And in order to create a system to put a man on the moon, many different kinds of scientists would have to be brought together to work under central direction according to a plan which set out specific interim tasks, and then continuously evaluated progress and fed back the results of those evaluations into the system.

The Defense Department and the Space Agency had found that corporations with "systems capabilities" could plan and program these complex undertakings much better than a government bureaucracy. The Job Corps, Rubel argued, was just such a complex undertaking. No one knew the "right" way to run a Job Corps center. Further-

more, it would take an enormously varied array of talents to design and carry out an effective program, and then redesign it according to its own successes and failures. It would take teachers, certainly, but it should also take psychologists, and educational research specialists, and social psychiatrists, and doctors, and community relations experts and guidance counselors and many other kinds of specialists who would all have to work according to a system or a plan which could be tested and measured and evaluated and modified. Furthermore, every Job Corps center would have to adjust its programs by making changes in many different "variable" inputs — the kinds of enrollees who were sent to the center, the infinitely different combinations of work training, education, and recreation experiences which the enrollees would be influenced by, the length of time at the center, etc.

Rubel proposed that the Job Corps immediately seek bids from industry for designs to run Job Corps centers, but not just because industry knew something about job training. He believed that industry could provide a "systems design and management capability" which was badly needed if the Job Corps were to succeed, and which bureaucrats in government couldn't provide, especially on a crash basis.

Shriver was excited about Rubel's idea; it was exactly the kind of innovation which appealed to him. It had elements of daring in it. It provided a

way to get business directly involved. It might help solve the worrisome problem of finding jobs for Job Corps graduates, because if industry did the training, industry could hardly refuse to hire the products. It also obviated the necessity of building an enormous in-government bureaucracy, something to which Shriver was strongly opposed. It got away from the kind of stodgy professionalism which Shriver abhorred. And if anyone could get under way fast, it should be American private enterprise.

But he was also a little skittish about it. How could you write a contract to run a training center when you had little idea what it would cost? How could you keep corporations from making enormous windfall profits? How much control over center operations would be kept in Washington Job Corps headquarters? What would be the reaction from Congress and educators? Would business really be interested in doing this kind of thing? And how was he going to handle the whole thing with Vern Alden, whose university approach was, at least in some aspects, antithetical to the industry approach?

On May 8, a chance to fly a trial balloon arose. Shriver was invited to address the Business Council, a blue-ribbon group of more than a hundred leading industrialists who meet periodically to discuss major issues of the day with top government officials. On this occasion, Shriver was full of ideas

on what industry should be doing about poverty. Perhaps industry might make cash contributions to extremely depressed areas which were unable to come up with the funds required to match federal grants. A new Business Advisory Committee for the War on Poverty was being organized, and volunteer members were needed. Industry should find ways to hire graduates of poverty job training programs by organizing a job-placement system. And then the kicker. Noting that business had developed extensive training programs during World War II to meet a national need, Shriver declared that "the advanced training methods developed by business in shooting wars are needed just as much in this new War against Poverty." Therefore he was considering plans to contract job training programs out to businesses, contracts which would provide, of course, an appropriate profit.

The reaction of the Business Council was restrained for the moment. But back at Poverty headquarters, several of the liberal staff members who had not been in on the discussions of Rubel's plan were upset. The idea of making a profit out of poverty appalled them. And the concept of putting public money in private hands to carry out social programs — of placing high school dropouts at the mercy of capitalists in residential training centers — was close to anathema. One aide even suggested that a "clarifying" statement should be issued retracting the entire proposition.

But otherwise, the trial balloon survived its initial ascent unscathed. Rubel continued to test his idea with businessmen, scientists, educators, and other experts across the country and got nothing but favorable reactions. Three days after the Business Council speech, Rubel spelled out his plan in further detail to Shriver, proposing that the Job Corps should experiment with several different ways of running centers, including running several directly with federal employees, several through universities and colleges, and several through contracts with profit-making corporations. In a sense, this would establish competing systems to test which one would work best.

This elaboration of Rubel's views was quickly adopted by Shriver as one of the basic planning principles for operation of Job Corps centers, and this pluralistic philosophy became deeply ingrained in Job Corps thinking.

During April, while Rubel's plan was being weighed by Shriver, the beginnings of a Job Corps planning group had started to pull together. Like the rest of the Poverty Task Force, the Job Corps planning group suffered from a special kind of poverty — poverty of funds to hire people, to travel on, to rent space with, to buy typewriters with, or even to buy paper to write on. Facing a prodigious planning challenge which — even with unlimited resources — staggered the experts, the

members of the President's Task Force for the War on Poverty were warriors without guns.

Not every new government program suffers from this handicap. Back in 1961, for instance, Shriver was able to take advantage of a special foreign aid "contingency fund" which funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars into the Peace Corps Task Force before the legislation ever passed — all perfectly legally. Two months after the Peace Corps was first organized, nearly three hundred people were hard at work. While there was confusion in getting the Peace Corps under way, most of its staff had desks, offices, telephones, secretaries, travel budgets, and all the other necessities for getting their job done.

The Poverty Task Force faced a far greater challenge. It had *ten* new programs to plan and get under way, not just one. In fact, just one of these ten programs, the Domestic Peace Corps or VISTA effort, was very similar in scope and challenge to the overseas Peace Corps Task Force in 1961. Yet after *three* full months of planning in 1964, VISTA had a part-time director, just five professionals on the staff, and two secretaries.

Moreover, the Poverty Task Force was planning the expenditure of nearly fifty times as much money as the Peace Corps for its first year of operations. Yet the Poverty planners had to live on necessarily niggling allowances out of the small White

House Special Projects Fund, plus whatever they could beg, borrow, or even steal from other government agencies. When that didn't work, most ended up paying for trips, supplies, and even other people's salaries out of their own pockets.

The administrative headaches and obstacles created by this lack of funds were stupendous. By mid-May, the Job Corps planning group was less than ten weeks old, but it had already had four different homes. First, one end of a cozy office located on the fifth floor of the Peace Corps building just a step away from Shriver and Yarmolinsky. Then, a couple of weeks later, most of the Poverty Task Force moved to the twelfth floor of the same building. Three weeks later, the same group was set up in dusty but spacious offices in a century-old edifice originally constructed as an art gallery, used as a barracks for Union soldiers during the Civil War, and then converted for use as the Court of Claims. Unfortunately, not long after the Task Force was settled, a pile driver working on a new building next door undermined the foundation of the Court of Claims, and the entire staff had to be evacuated on two hours' notice with orders not to re-enter the building under any circumstances. Sure enough, large cracks had appeared in the rear wall, and several quarter-ton chunks of plaster had crashed down inside from the forty-foot ceilings. Having avoided this impending disaster, the intrepid planners were split apart into two groups, one of which

was relegated to a building constructed as “temporary” quarters in World War I, and the other shunted to another nineteenth-century structure most recently used as an emergency hospital.

Each move, of course, completely disrupted planning operations. Telephones took time to get hooked up — and then always with a new extension so that it took days to re-establish communications with working counterparts in other agencies and outside the government. Movers shifted files and cartons around haphazardly; sometimes it took weeks to locate valuable working papers, and by then it was time to move again.

Furthermore, each move put the Task Force planners a little farther away from the headquarters offices of Shriver and Yarmolinsky. The problem of maintaining communications between the working groups and the leadership became acute. Shriver himself was so completely involved in the problems of mobilizing public and Congressional support, as well as running the Peace Corps, that he simply wasn’t available for day-to-day guidance and decision-making on the million and one issues that arose. And, in mid-April, Yarmolinsky was hospitalized for a month following a serious automobile accident in which he came within minutes of losing his life through loss of blood. During this month, a nearly complete vacuum of day-to-day leadership existed at the top of the Task Force, and each of the study groups — Job Corps, Com-

munity Action, and VISTA — was left largely to its own resources and wisdom for shaping its plans.

At this time, Vern Alden, like Shriver, was caught between two conflicting demands. He still had major responsibilities to fulfill at his university back in Ohio, and much of his time allocated to Job Corps was spent outside of Washington consulting with experts across the country on various phases of the Job Corps operation.

As a result, the Job Corps planning effort in Washington foundered badly. By the end of April, only a half dozen professionals had been recruited to tackle the imposing array of planning problems, and they were harrassed by the frequent moves and hamstrung by frustrating administrative obstacles.

By the end of May, the planning staff had added a dozen more professionals by getting industry to lend several consultants, and mobilizing volunteers who were willing to work for no pay. But with Yarmolinsky in the hospital and Alden in town only one day a week or so, even this small group had trouble getting policies discussed and decisions made in a timely fashion.

Yet, of all the ten programs* proposed as part of

* To list these programs for the benefit of the reader they were, in the order provided for in the legislation: (1) The Job Corps; residential education and job training for dropouts between sixteen and twenty-one, (2) The Neighborhood Youth Corps; hometown counseling and jobs for in-school and out-of-school teen-agers between sixteen and twenty-one, (3) The College Work-Study program; part-time jobs for needy college

the poverty package, the greatest planning burden clearly lay on Job Corps. Most of the other programs consisted of grants to local community or state organizations where the grantee had to assume the responsibility for planning the project, recruiting and hiring the staff, designing the specific training programs, enrolling the people who were to benefit, and then administering the operation.

But Job Corps had to do all these things itself in the case of conservation centers, which were a federal government responsibility from start to finish. And even though the large training centers might be contracted out, Job Corps still had a major responsibility for designing the guidelines and criteria for each facet of center operation which the contractor would assume responsibility for, and then for recruiting and selecting the enrollees and supervising how well the contractor administered the center. Furthermore, the Job Corps was still

students, (4) The Community Action program; grants to local communities and state agencies for planning and implementing comprehensive poverty programs, (5) The Adult Basic Education program; grants to states to provide for remedial education for illiterate adults, (6) Rural Family Loans; credit for poor rural families to enable them to build their income-earning capacity, (7) The Migrant program; grants to agencies carrying out comprehensive programs to help migrant workers, (8) The Small Business Loan program; loans to small businessmen at or near the poverty level, or who employ poor people, (9) Family Unity Through Jobs; supplemental welfare payments and services to help families living on relief or eligible for relief under liberalized criteria, and (10) Volunteers in Service to America; the domestic Peace Corps.

looked to as the vanguard operation of the entire poverty program — the activity which would get under way fastest with the most visibility, and consequently under the greatest public and Congressional scrutiny.

Under these circumstances, the Job Corps had a crying need to mobilize the top experts and the best organizations in the country to help plan the program. Yet this kind of talent costs money, a commodity of which the Job Corps planning group had precious little. As a result, the Job Corps study group at this time had to make do with whatever talents it could find that were available without charge. This limitation seriously crippled the entire planning effort.

By the end of May little had been done to organize the million and one administrative details which had to be settled before Job Corps could get under way. What should the design standards be for constructing and renovating centers? How were the enrollees going to be recruited, how would they be selected, and according to what criteria? How were they going to get from their homes to a center, and on what basis would enrollees be assigned to centers? Who would take care of medical support in Job Corps centers? What kinds of staff in what numbers would be needed at each center, and how were they going to be recruited and selected? What specific kinds of educational materials should be purchased? How much of

what kinds of equipment would each Job Corps center need and who was going to buy this equipment? What about clothes for enrollees? None of these questions had answers.

In fact, not even one site for a Job Corps center had been selected. Both Agriculture and Interior staffs in and outside of Washington had been hard at work, and had forwarded to the Job Corps a total of 308 proposed conservation center locations capable of holding over forty thousand enrollees. But the Job Corps had established no criteria for deciding which of these would be approved, and which rejected. Furthermore, conservation agency cost estimates for construction of centers at these sites ranged as high as \$1 million each, four times the amount budgeted by Job Corps for camp construction.

In late May, political strategists were still predicting possible passage of the poverty bill by late June, and an appropriation in early July. If this prediction proved accurate, then the Job Corps was committed by its presentation to Congress to have centers open and ready to admit six thousand enrollees in September. But the Job Corps could never have met this time schedule given the status of planning in May.

Fortunately, at least for the Job Corps, the political strategists were overoptimistic. For the poverty bill was still deep in the legislative labyrinth, from which it would not emerge for two more

months, and Congress did not appropriate funds to get the program started until October.

Textbooks sometimes describe the process by which Congress passes legislation as something like a hurdle race, with a beginning and a given number of obstacles which must be crossed in a set sequential order in order to reach the finish line. This analogy is badly misleading. The legislative process is more like a maze when any controversial bill is involved; and the poverty bill was among the most controversial bills of this session of Congress.

In this maze, there are certain checkpoints which every piece of legislation must pass through. There must be subcommittee hearings in both House and Senate. The committees must report out a bill. The bill must pass through other committees which determine whether and when they will be brought to the floor of each chamber for debate. Each chamber must pass the bill. And then if the wording is not identical in the versions passed, one of the chambers must accept the other's version, or a conference is called to compromise the differences. Then both House and Senate must pass the conference rewrite. And this whole process must be completed within a given time limit. After each biennial election, each and every pending bill must go back and start all over again.

Throughout this process, there are proponents

and opponents of the bill, and the final voting at each checkpoint usually resolves down into a battle between these forces. But at each stage there are also special interest forces trying to reshape the bill to their mold, looking for that particular moment when they have the balance of power to stop further action unless and until their demands are acceded to.

Not only must the legislative strategists preserve the essential integrity of the bill as it winds its way through the process, but at any point in time except the very beginning and the very end, they must decide where to press for action next, and how. This means that action ebbs and flows from the House side of the Capitol over to the Senate, and then back to the House, from week to week. The essence of political artistry on Capitol Hill is sensing how to manage this ebb and flow, when to push hard and when to compromise, who holds the key to the next step, and what he wants in return for his support.

In mid-June, the poverty bill had been in the maze for a full three months. But it hadn't gotten very far. First the House Education and Labor Subcommittee hearings dragged out from mid-March until April 28, as more than one hundred witnesses registered their views, and were questioned by the Committee. Then the Democrats caucused in the committee room for nearly two weeks and called Shriver back to meet with them

for two full days in order to iron out differences of opinion and settle on the specific changes they wanted to make in the Administration's bill. During the Democratic caucuses, the Republicans alternately held their own caucus, and lined up outside the doors of the committee chamber to publicize their feeling that they were being "locked out" of the discussions by the Democrats. The atmosphere was charged with political partisanship.

Finally, in mid-May, the Republicans and Democrats got together in executive session to "mark up" the Administration's bill. Most of the debate centered on the controversial Community Action section, which was substantially rewritten by the Committee.

The Job Corps escaped with only relatively minor modifications. First, the language was changed to authorize the enrollment of females as well as males. Then both Republicans and Democrats expressed concern over the kinds of trainees Job Corps would enroll. Some feared that youths might drop out of school in order to get into a "soft deal with pay" like the Job Corps. But other committee members were more concerned that Job Corps might duplicate other training programs, like the Manpower Training projects under the Labor Department, if the entrance standards were not clearly set so as to accept for enrollment only youths from the *most* disadvantaged segment of the spectrum of disadvantaged youth. Therefore,

on the recommendation of Republican Congressman Alphonzo Bell of California, an amendment was added to prevent the enrollment of high school graduates except in exceptional circumstances, and to prohibit the enrollment of youths unless local school authorities concluded that it would be impracticable for them to continue their education or training locally. This amendment did not really change Job Corps recruiting plans, but the Job Corps planners downtown were deeply concerned about how to get local school officials to certify that local training was no longer practicable.

The Gentlelady from Oregon also made several attempts to require Job Corps to use public schools to carry out the educational and vocational training programs in Job Corps centers. She was plainly skeptical of the advisability of giving this job to universities, and was later even more deeply concerned when she found that private profit-making corporations would be paid for assuming this responsibility. Other committee members refused to go along with the tough language she originally proposed, and a very much diluted version was included instead. This was extremely fortunate, for later Job Corps experience made it abundantly clear that public schools had neither the desire nor the full range of competences needed to take on the responsibility of operating educational and training programs at Job Corps centers.

The House Committee completed its deliberations during the last week in May, and reported the bill out on a straight, party-line vote.

During the entire month of June, the poverty bill languished in the Rules Committee, the turnstile through which legislation must pass before it can reach the House floor. During the Kennedy years, many a bill (including the Youth Conservation Corps) had been buried in the Rules Committee, which simply never allowed some measures to reach the full House of Representatives for debate. The pivotal importance of the House Rules Committee in getting legislation through to the floor of the House of Representatives for debate and a vote came about through a very strange quirk in its makeup; of its fifteen members, seven were conservatives who could generally be expected to be unalterably opposed to most new legislation expanding federal government services. This meant that any new piece of social legislation had to win the support of each of the other eight committee members. And every one of these eight knew that, by holding back his vote, he could delay or even doom any such legislation.

The poverty bill was not satisfactory to these eight members. One section of it, Title III, contained a program of grants up to fifteen hundred dollars designed to give destitute rural farmers investing or working capital which would give them a chance to raise their own income-earning capac-

ity permanently. Congressmen from rural areas had long supported a program of liberal loans administered by the Farmers Home Administration of the Department of Agriculture for farmers of moderately low income. But the new program in the poverty bill was aimed at farmers whose income was so low that they couldn't qualify for these loans and therefore had little or no access to credit.

However, the Budget Bureau and the Treasury Department had put the clamps on the liberal loan program, seeing it as a potentially endless draw upon limited federal funds. Rural Congressmen therefore feared that the new program of grants to destitute farmers might enable some of their constituents, through a grant, to "leapfrog" their slightly better-off neighbors who could qualify for non-existent loan funds, but weren't badly enough off to qualify for the even more liberal grants.

At the same time, urban Congressmen felt that the farmers grant authority was unfair to their constituents; there was no comparable program in the bill for poor urban families whose income might be just as low, and who might be just as needy. And so the Rules Committee temporized, stalling the poverty bill without further action. Moreover, Administration vote counters and House majority leaders reported that the voting picture, once the bill reached the floor, was still murky, with the clearly committed votes about evenly

divided for and against and several dozen votes uncommitted. Under these circumstances, there seemed to be little point to press the Rules Committee.

Nevertheless, time was fast flying by in a Congress anxious to get back home in the District to start the campaign for elections in November. Therefore Administration legislative strategists switched to a new tactic — press for Senate Committee action on the poverty bill and a Senate floor vote in advance of House floor action.

The evening of June 19, 1964, was sheer pandemonium in the Capitol Building offices of Hubert Humphrey. A mob of reporters, Senators, and Senate staffers shouted, cheered, and exulted unrestrainedly, for the Senate had just passed perhaps the most important part of the entire Kennedy legacy — the Civil Rights Act of 1964. And Senate passage was the bill's sternest test.

But inside Humphrey's office, the way was being paved for the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 — the Administration's poverty bill.

At the meeting being held were Shriver, Humphrey, and Senate Subcommittee Chairman Pat McNamara, the quick-tempered, fighting Irish plumber turned Senator from Michigan. The problem — the poverty bill was in danger of being bogged down in the Senate just as it was in the House. Lists of witnesses who wanted to testify for

the bill were snowballing. With the Fourth of July weekend coming up, and then the week-long recess for the Republican National Convention, hearings could conceivably stretch until August. That meant that the poverty bill might not be passed by the time the Democratic Convention was held in late August. This would make Johnson's Declaration of Unconditional War in his State of the Union address look as hollow as a Navy blimp. But, on the other hand, if the hearings were cut short, it might give valuable ammunition to the opposition, who would charge that the poverty bill was being railroaded through Congress. The risks were debated — and a decision was made to end the hearings as soon as possible.

The Senate Subcommittee had already heard Shriver and Labor Secretary Wirtz testify on the War on Poverty on June 17 and 18. In order to wind up the hearings quickly, two more days were scheduled the following week. Shriver was recalled for further questioning, an educational expert from the American Council on Education appeared, and — in order to mollify the minority side — two witnesses opposed to the bill were called, Matt Triggs from the staunchly conservative Farm Bureau and Congressman Peter Freylinghuysen from the House Education and Labor Committee.

With the hearings completed on the twenty-fifth, legislative strategists huddled again. The

House Rules Committee had held several meetings with proponent and opposition members from the House Education and Labor Committee but still seemed indisposed to clear the poverty bill for floor action in the near future. So if there was to be action, it had to come on the Senate side. The White House decision — it was time for action. The orders were to move the bill out of committee and onto the Senate floor, even if it meant giving in on some of the fights which might occur in committee.

Subcommittee Chairman McNamara hesitated, but agreed to try, even though it grated against his fighting temperament.

He was magnificently successful. On June 30 the Subcommittee met and reported the bill out to the full Committee. With time taken out for the Fourth of July recess, the full Committee in turn reported the bill out to the Senate floor on July 7. Moreover, the bill was in excellent shape, meeting the highest hopes of the Administration. Only one amendment had been added to the Job Corps section. Carefully worked out between Shriver and Senator Javits of New York, this authorized the Job Corps to make grants to state youth and conservation agencies to operate Job Corps centers. In all other respects, the Senate Committee proposal duplicated the Job Corps sections of the bill pending before the House Rules Committee.

Congress then recessed for the Republican Na-

tional Convention, where the Goldwater steamroller amazed the country by polling enough votes to nominate the Arizona Senator for President on the first ballot, despite last-ditch moderate efforts.

Reconvening in Washington the third week in July, the Senate lost no time in taking up the poverty bill. On Tuesday, the twenty-first, the bill was given its first reading, and floor debate opened on Wednesday the twenty-second. The floor debate was anything but routine.

Floor manager Pat McNamara couldn't even finish his opening exposition and defense of the bill before Senator Lausche, the economy-minded Democrat from Ohio, broke into question how much the Job Corps would cost per trainee per year. And Senator Tower, the conservative Republican from Texas and one of Goldwater's leading supporters at the Cow Palace just the week before, opened up with a full-scale attack. The Job Corps, he declared, is just a "renaming of the old Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's. There is not the need for conservation now that there was then. Nor is there the need for this kind of training or program," he continued.

Zeroing in on the kinds of youths who would be enrolled, he suggested that "many school authorities would use this program as an opportunity to get rid of some highly undesirable students. In effect are we not saying that such students are untrainable by the public schools, but are not un-

trainable on our part, because the Federal Government in its infinite wisdom, knowledge, ability, and omniscience can accomplish anything in the world? All we have to do is to throw some Federal money at the problem and immediately it is supposed to go away."

Taking up the cost estimates of the Job Corps, he pressed the attack. "The Job Corps . . . would cost \$190 million the first year for some 40,000 enrollees. It would cost \$5,000 each. That is seven times the average per pupil cost in public schools in America. By the way, that is more per person than it costs to send a student to Harvard or Yale."

Senator Robertson of Virginia then continued the barrage of criticism. Raising the race issue, he warned that Job Corps camps would be integrated. "That means, of course," he predicted, "that in the South, at least, there will be what amounts to segregated camps, because only one type of citizen will attend." Further challenging the basic philosophy of the program, he declared, "The proposed new camps would be filled with school dropouts, juvenile criminals, and what not. We would get no worthwhile work out of them. We cannot get manual labor from a man and train him for technical work at the same time. They cannot be combined."

But the attack failed to stem the momentum built up behind the bill. Quickly the Chamber moved on to consider amendments. Senator Winston Prouty of Vermont proposed a provision to be

added to the Job Corps section designed to keep politics out of the Job Corps centers. The effect of the Prouty amendment was to prevent Job Corps staff from inquiring about or considering political party affiliations in dealing with Job Corps trainees, and to prevent both staff and enrollees in the Job Corps from taking an active part in political campaigns except as individual citizens. The amendment was accepted by voice vote.

Next came a far more delicate issue — the role of state governors in controlling Job Corps operations. Leaders among the southern Democrats had already warned Shriver that some protective language would have to be accepted to prevent Job Corps centers from being placed around the country without regard to the wishes or advice of state governors. Their fears were quite clear — that liberals in the Administration would use the Job Corps as a device to establish an integrated school system throughout the South. Shriver argued hard that he had no intention of doing any such thing — that it would be foolhardy to put Job Corps centers in places where local citizens were against them.

In a series of quick discussions in chambers just off the Senate floor, Shriver and Senator George Smathers, the respected and intelligent moderate from Florida, jockeyed for position. Would Shriver agree to let governors pass approval on all Job Corps centers in their states? Shriver demurred,

suggesting that some governors would prefer not to have to take a position publicly, even though they might be for the program privately. Shriver doubted that any southern governor could put himself in a position of approving an integrated Job Corps center; therefore if the law required the Governor's approval, it would be the same as saying no Job Corps centers in the South.

Besides, if Shriver had to get the governors' approval, it was as good as giving the governors control of the program. Any governor could hold up Job Corps operations interminably just by holding up his approval. Shriver was wary of the whole proposition.

Smathers conferred again with members of the southern delegation. The reply — some protection had to be built in the law. Senator Humphrey joined the session, and a compromise was worked out. The law would provide that every governor would get a chance to disapprove or veto the establishment of a Job Corps center in his state. However, if he did not exercise this right within thirty days after he received the official federal government plan to operate a center, the Job Corps could move ahead anyway. This seemed to relieve governors of an uncomfortable obligation to take a specific position, but nevertheless seemed to prevent arbitrary and unbridled intrusions by the Job Corps where it was not wanted. Smathers pondered the amendment, and then agreed.

Within minutes the amendment was proposed on the floor and approved by voice vote.

The Senate debate continued. And though sufficient votes were in hand to assure final passage of the bill, that did not mean that some drastic and even crippling amendments might not be approved. In fact, at one point, the bill came perilously close to disaster — a disaster which was ironically averted indirectly by the one person who was most interested in seeing the bill come to nought — Senator Barry Goldwater.

Though both Representatives and Senators are elected officials, their political instincts are radically different. Representatives face an election fight every two years, which means they must look at nearly every action they take with a view toward its impact on a campaign which is either just around the corner or already in progress. Senators, on the other hand, face re-election only every six years; as a result, they can afford to examine legislation more on the basis of its merits and less on the basis of its short-term political impact. In connection with the poverty bill, this meant that the Senate debates took place in an atmosphere which was far less influenced by partisan political squabble than the clashes in the House.

But there is another important difference between Congressmen and Senators. Congressmen represent districts, some of which are only a few square miles in area; they tend to identify with

local problems back in the hometown or the county seat. Senators identify with an entire state as a constituency, and often share an outlook similar to that of the Governor. Thus it was logical that the major debate in the Senate should turn on the role of the states and the governors of the states in the poverty program.

Shriver had already made his position clear on this issue. In a long series of interchanges with Senator Javits during the hearings, he had stated that he had every intention of developing cooperative relationships with governors and state agencies, but objected strongly to any kind of restriction which would force the poverty program to work exclusively *through* the states. Most of the parts of the poverty program were designed to be carried out by making grants directly to local communities; Shriver felt this mode of action was absolutely essential to success and particularly to rapid action.

Though an acceptable compromise had been worked out to give the governors some rein on Job Corps operations, Republican Senator Winston Prouty now proposed an amendment that would have given governors approval power over the most innovative part of the poverty program, the Community Action grants. Shriver was unalterably opposed, and passage of the amendment would have been a major defeat. The Prouty amendment was voted on and approved, 45 to 44,

with most southern Senators voting for the amendment, but Goldwater not voting. Poverty aides in the galleries were shocked.

But Senator Javits, who had his own plan for involving states in the poverty program, quickly moved that the Senate reconsider its vote on the Prouty amendment. Prouty retaliated by moving that Javits's action be tabled — a parliamentary maneuver which means "killed." And then Humphrey quickly called for a roll call vote on Prouty's motion, in order to gain time to regroup his forces.

The roll call proceeded slowly, and poverty program staffers in the galleries gasped as each vote was called out. The final tally was 45 to 45, with Goldwater *not* voting. If Senator Goldwater had voted, the Prouty amendment would have stood as passed. But now the Senate would decide on whether to reconsider its vote on the Prouty amendment.

Again the galleries hushed to hear every name called. And the initial announcement brought cries of anguish, for the tally was 46 to 46. This meant that those who wanted the Senate to reconsider the Prouty amendment had not mustered enough votes to gain a majority — they had lost. But Humphrey requested a recount, and the recount showed an error; the vote was 46 to 45 *for* reconsidering the Prouty amendment.

Again, Senator Goldwater had not voted, and could have cast the ballot which would have con-

firmed the passage of the Prouty amendment. Surprisingly, only a few minutes before this exchange of votes, Goldwater had appeared on the Senate floor to accept a series of tributes on the occasion of his nomination as Republican standard-bearer for the upcoming Presidential campaign. Why the Senator from Arizona chose not to cast his ballot on this crucial issue at precisely the moment when one vote would have tipped the balance was an enigma to his angry Republican colleagues then, and remains so today.

More debate on the Prouty amendment followed, and both Javits and Smathers argued strongly for alternative amendments which each of them intended to introduce. Finally, a new vote was taken, and the Prouty amendment was finally narrowly defeated 46 to 45. Later in the day, the plan espoused by Senator Smathers — which gave governors a veto power over several other parts of the bill similar to that already agreed to for the Job Corps — was accepted and adopted as part of the bill.

But the legislative day was still not over on the Senate floor. And neither were the surprises. Late in the afternoon, Senator Humphrey rose to offer an amendment. Speaking on the controversial farmers grant program in Title III of the bill, he explained, "What I seek to do is to strike out 'grants' and permit the Farmers Home Administration to make loans up to \$1,500. In other words,

loans would be substituted for grants." After brief clarification of the language, the amendment was passed.

Though staff members in the Agriculture Department regarded this as gutting their whole program, opposition to the farmers grant authority in the House of Representatives had proved impregnable to all Administration arguments. The Rules Committee simply would not clear the bill until they were assured the grants were eliminated. Now that the Senate had acted to amend this previously unacceptable part of the bill the way was cleared for House Rules Committee action.

The Senate continued to debate the poverty bill; but successful resolution of issues of the role of the governors and the farmers grant authority had removed the two biggest obstacles to final passage. With these out of the way, it was only a matter of time until final passage, which came late on Thursday, July 23, by a lopsided vote of 62 to 33. Nearly a third of the Republican Senators lined up in support of the measure.

On July 29 the House Rules Committee cleared the poverty bill for floor debate in the House of Representatives by a vote of eight to seven. And the stage was set for the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to face its last and sternest test.

A debate on the floor of the House of Representatives is a strange drama in which much that seems pivotal — at least to the uniformed observer

—is merely superficial, and much that seems insignificant is crucial. The drama itself unfolds through the interplay of individual histrionics on the part of selected members of the cast. With sharp rhetoric, the principals maneuver, thrusting and parrying as they utilize parliamentary devices to speed up, slow down, or close off the action. Then, finally, the voting—which often seems more like an ill-controlled stampede dominated by mob psychology than any rational process of legislative decision-making—brings the action to its denouement.

While the maneuvers are complex, the action often subtle and diversionary, and the real conflicts masked in some form only remotely connected with the issue, the players understand their parts. In this case, both of the opposing sides knew what their objectives were. The mission of the non-southern Democrats and moderate Republicans—to pass the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, whatever the cost. The goal of the southerners and more conservative Republicans—to delay, and if possible defeat, the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

The curtain rose on Wednesday, August 5. According to the schedule laid down by the House Rules Committee, each side of the aisle had three hours of floor time to define the issues, to spell out its position, and to attack the stand taken by the other side. The debate was acrimonious, and the

two sides probed each other's defenses with thrusts designed to split away voting support wherever a possible weakness was predicated.

On the attack, the opposition claimed the bill was just election year political gimmickry inspired by a desire to buy votes in November. It was a package of programs which had been pending before Congress separately but never passed because they couldn't stand on their own merits. At a time when the budget was still in deficit, it was fiscally irresponsible to undertake a new billion-dollar program which might double, triple, or quadruple in size before the decade was out. The country had commitments to shield the rest of the world from Communism with our military strength, and we couldn't afford to fight a War on Poverty at home and keep up our commitments abroad simultaneously. The programs in the War on Poverty would add further duplication and overlap to an already confusing welter of federal programs dealing with the poor. The Administration was making no effort to straighten out the existing mess, which already cost upward of forty billion dollars a year. The poverty program was just another billion-dollar hand-out disguised with fancy slogans and a fantastic public relations campaign designed to hoodwink the poor. Within the bill itself, the director of the new agency was being given blanket authority without limitation to carry out whatever programs he wanted, and even to oversee and direct other

Cabinet officers. The various parts of the bill were ill-conceived, and wouldn't really work; the Job Corps, for instance, wouldn't really train anyone for useful work. Moreover, the entire program would be used to force integration in the South. State and local government were going to be completely bypassed, and private organizations would become eligible for federal grants unrestrained and uncontrolled by local government.

Moreover, the Administration couldn't even seem to figure who was poor and who wasn't. Suddenly some soft-headed liberals seemed to have decided that everyone with an income of less than three thousand dollars a year was poor. Thus it appeared that all privates and corporals in the Army would be eligible for poverty subsidies, as well as large numbers of graduate students studying for their Ph.D.'s at colleges all across the United States. How can anyone attack a problem they can't even define, the critics wanted to know.

The supporters fought back. The fact that one out of five Americans remained trapped in a hopeless cycle of poverty was unconscionable in a nation as affluent as the United States. We had the resources and know-how to be the first nation in history to eliminate poverty. Moreover, poverty was expensive. Welfare payments just to keep poor people from starving were high and going higher. But with a little help, these people could become self-supporting and "taxpayers instead of tax-

eaters." We couldn't afford *not* to do something about poverty.

The new effort was designed to put into effect programs which were well planned and designed to eliminate the basic causes of poverty. The new agency was being set up with authority, not only to run these new programs, but to coordinate and straighten out existing efforts. That way the effectiveness of many other government programs would also be increased. These new programs would not bypass local government; what they would do was mobilize local resources to attack poverty through comprehensive action programs, which would be developed locally and carried out by existing local agencies.

The debate raged for two days. And, to the spectators in the galleries, it must have appeared to be the most bitter kind of attack and counterattack — the heart of the legislative process through which issues are raised, conflicts joined, and resolutions achieved. In fact, however, this first act on stage was just a diversion from the real action. Most of the battle lines between the adversaries had been well defined before the debate ever started. And very little was said in the course of the debate that had not already been brought out in the course of the committee hearings.

The real battle — the fight for the last few uncommitted votes — was going on offstage. One of the Administration's maneuvers was already com-

pleted by the time the debate began; by Wednesday noon, Yarmolinsky had already agreed with the conservationists on an amendment which would guarantee that at least 40 percent of the Job Corps trainees would be assigned to conservation work. The other ploy — the excommunication of Yarmolinsky from the program — was agreed to Thursday afternoon less than twenty-four hours before voting on the bill was to begin.

Yarmolinsky's demise remains one of the most deplorable sacrifices of a dedicated and hard-working public official to political expediency that has hit Washington in the last decade. He was a victim of suspicion, fear, and circumstances, whose fate was determined by a peculiar confluence of events with which he had nothing to do.

During the first week in August, as the showdown on the poverty bill in the House of Representatives approached, the issue of how to vote was still open to many members of the North Carolina delegation. They were well aware that their votes might be crucial. And somehow some members of the delegation developed a serious concern that a man named Yarmolinsky might have an important role in the administration of the program. Most of them had never met him, nor were they aware of any specific activities which made him unacceptable. But what they had heard about him made him sound suspicious.

First, he was of Russian extraction, and Jewish,

and his parents had been connected with some organizations that were known to be left wing and alleged to be subversive. Yarmolinsky himself, however, had never been connected with any questionable organizations. A graduate of Harvard and Yale Law School, he had gone on to become law clerk to a Justice of the Supreme Court, then worked for the Fund for the Republic, and later became public affairs editor for Doubleday books — hardly a dossier which reveals any dangerous left-wing sympathies.

Nevertheless, shortly after McNamara appointed him as his Special Assistant in the Pentagon, Yarmolinsky became the target for right-wing smear groups. General Edwin A. Walker, who had created a national stir by distributing conservative literature to the troops under his command, referred to Yarmolinsky as a security risk in testimony before Congress. Other right-wing publications alleged that Yarmolinsky was part of the grand plot of the Communists to infiltrate and take over the government; Yarmolinsky's alleged mission in this scheme was to replace J. Edgar Hoover as head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. To anyone who knew Adam Yarmolinsky, these charges were so absurd that they were comical.

On the job at the Pentagon, Yarmolinsky was no politician. He had no patience for trivia, or for lengthy expositions of the obvious. He was known to interrupt those Pentagon spectacles, the mili-

tary briefings, and ask those in charge to get to the point. Socially he was superbly fascinating in a small group, but ill-at-ease at the more typical government cocktail parties with casts of hundreds. As McNamara's Special Assistant, Yarmolinsky got handed many sensitive assignments, such as civil rights problems in the Armed Forces, which were bound to ruffle feathers among the career military services or get him in trouble with Congress or other Departments around Washington.

On the basis of this circumstantial evidence, the appointment of Yarmolinsky to a senior position in the poverty program would certainly not have been welcomed in the South. But it is doubtful that his appointment would have been openly opposed, had the vote situation on the poverty bill not placed the North Carolina delegation in a position to exact a price for their support.

Early in that first week of August, one member of the delegation had cornered the President momentarily at the White House to express his concern about Yarmolinsky's future in the poverty program. The President brushed aside the comment with an ambiguous reply. On Wednesday, Shriver breakfasted with several members of the delegation who pressed him hard to commit himself as to whether Yarmolinsky would get a high appointment or not. Shriver said that it was not his decision to make — obviously the President was

going to make the appointments and Shriver couldn't speak for the President.

On Thursday, the votes of the North Carolina delegation were the only marginal uncommitted votes on the poverty bill. House Speaker John McCormack, together with Majority Leader Carl Albert and Whip Hale Boggs summoned the delegation to the Speaker's office located just off the House floor where the debate on the poverty bill was already more than half over. Congressman Cooley did most of the talking, and made it clear that Yarmolinsky was unacceptable to them as a prospective appointee to any senior position in the poverty program. Shriver, who was also present, again stated that he could not commit the President. The issue was a standoff.

At that point, a quorum call temporarily interrupted the meeting and the delegation filed out to the House floor to answer the roll call. Speaker McCormack and Shriver headed for telephones. When they returned, the Speaker gave Cooley the assurance that he had been looking for. The President would not recommend Yarmolinsky for any position in the poverty program.

Late Thursday afternoon, the time allotted for the debate expired and the time for voting on the bill and its amendments arrived. The House deferred further action until the next day, Friday, August 7.

Under the parliamentary rules used by the

House of Representatives, the members of the House convene as a "Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union" in order to debate amendments. While acting as a "Committee of the Whole," the House can adopt very flexible procedures to regulate debate and prevent filibusters. But all actions taken by the House as a "Committee of the Whole" must be confirmed by a final vote of the membership convened as the House of Representatives.

And so, as the House met on Friday to complete its work on the poverty bill, it sat as a "Committee of the Whole." Almost immediately Congressman Smith, Chairman of the Rules Committee and a determined opponent of the poverty bill, proposed an amendment to "strike the enacting clause and return the bill to the House." This step was equivalent to rejecting the poverty bill in its entirety as it had been reported out by the House Education and Labor Committee. In effect, the Committee would have been under orders from the House to reconsider its work and report out a different bill.

The votes on Congressman Smith's motion were carefully counted and totaled. Votes for recommittal — 170. Votes against recommittal — only 135.

But this seeming defeat was not final. It had to be affirmed by the House of Representatives sitting as the House. Supporters of the bill temporized in order to rally their troops. And then

Speaker of the House John McCormack called for a new vote on the motion with the Chamber sitting as the House of Representatives. The votes were ticked off by roll call, one by one, name by name.

Floor manager Congressman Phil Landrum from Georgia knew that this vote was the turning point. For even though a vote to send the poverty bill back to the House Education and Labor Committee would almost certainly kill any chance of its passing during this session, such a vote would be far easier to defend in the upcoming election campaign than a vote against final passage. For a vote to recommit sounded like a positive action — an action which might be taken by a responsible lawmaker who was for a poverty program in principle, but who would not compromise himself by voting for a badly conceived and poorly written piece of legislation. A vote against final passage, however, would seem only negative; many would interpret it as an undeniable vote against poor people and minority groups.

Unless the supporters of the bill could muster the votes to win this roll call, there would be no more debate. There would be no hope of getting the bill passed before the Democratic Convention coming up in three weeks, and probably little hope of getting it passed this session. And, in fact, there would be little hope for more “Great Society” legislation which was already in the works behind the poverty bill.

The clerks completed the tally and labored over the totals. The final results. Votes for recommitment — 197. Votes against recommitment — 225. The battle had been won. The bill would pass.

Now that the supporters of the bill had turned back the opposition's main frontal assault, the conflict turned to skirmishes over amendments. Landrum first moved to substitute the Senate-passed bill for the bill reported out by the House Committee. This move, in effect, incorporated all the changes made by the Senate, both in committee and on the floor.

With this move accepted, debate on amendments proceeded rapidly. Congressman Thompson of New Jersey immediately moved to strike out the language under the Job Corps section inserted in the Powell Committee by Republican Congressman Alphonzo Bell. This was the section which was intended to keep Job Corps from enrolling youths who might be trained more cheaply in local schools. The stated reason given for taking it out — it might keep many boys and girls out of the Job Corps who badly needed this kind of training. But the real reason behind the Thompson move was a fear that some cities and towns, particularly in the South, might use this clause to discriminate against Negroes or other minority groups. Congressman Albert Quie, the Republican from Minnesota who looks more like a college fullback than a national legislator, argued in vain for keeping the

Bell language. "What I worry about," he declared, "in connection with the Job Corps is that it will not get to the people who have the real problem." Quie was clearly concerned that the Job Corps might become too selective, and screen out the difficult problem cases. Nevertheless, Thompson's motion was accepted by a vote margin of nearly two to one.

A few minutes later, in an effort to embarrass the Administration, Congressman Ayres of Ohio rose to read excerpts from a brief memorandum that Adam Yarmolinsky had sent to Joe Califano, then a Special Assistant to Defense Secretary McNamara. Copies of the memorandum had been bootlegged to the Hill by Yarmolinsky enemies in the Defense Department. The memorandum itself was innocent enough and merely described some of the engineering and logistic services which the Job Corps hoped the Defense Department would be able to provide in order to get the program under way. But parts of it, read out of context, left the implication that Defense Department funds were being used to finance poverty program operations. Congressional watchdogs are continually on the lookout for instances where agencies divert funds for purposes not approved by Congress; in this case, the opposition hoped to nail the Administration with financial skulduggery before the poverty bill had even passed.

Landrum, however, interrupted Ayres to an-

nounce that "I have been told on the highest authority that not only will he [Yarmolinsky] not be appointed, but that he will not be considered if he is recommended for a place in this agency." The excommunication order had been delivered and executed. And Ayres's attempt to embarrass the Administration had been blunted.

Sensing that the time had come to clinch the victory, Landrum immediately made and got approval of a motion to close off all further debate on amendments at the supper hour. The pace of activity accelerated rapidly. Congressman Saylor, a Republican from Pennsylvania, proposed the amendment agreed on with the conservationists (except that the language also created a separate Youth Conservation Corps within the Job Corps, a provision which the Administration had *not* agreed to). Landrum voiced his acceptance, and it was approved by voice vote.

Ultra-conservative John Bell Williams of Mississippi then read a proposed amendment to require each Job Corps enrollee to file an affidavit that "he does not believe in, and is not a member of and does not support any organization that believes in or teaches the overthrow of the United States government by force or violence or by any illegal or unconstitutional methods." In addition, a pledge of allegiance to the United States was also required.

Staff members from the Poverty Task Force in the gallery gasped. A pledge of allegiance, OK.

But to ask a sixteen-year-old high school dropout to file a non-Communist affidavit seemed ludicrous.

But the amendment passed by a vote of 144 to 112. And shortly thereafter, a final vote was taken on the complete package of the Senate bill plus the House amendments agreed to that afternoon. Though the vote was close, 228 to 190, there was never any doubt that the fight was over. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 had passed its sternest test and would become law.

That night, Poverty Task Force members, now numbering nearly a hundred in all, celebrated at a victory party in Georgetown which continued well into the hours of Saturday morning. But for the half dozen or so staff members who had worked most closely with Adam Yarmolinsky, it was a time of tears and profound disillusionment.

6

IN mid-June, both the poverty bill on Capitol Hill and the Job Corps planning group downtown were in the doldrums. Six weeks of flurried activity had finally pushed the bill through Congress. No longer was there any doubt about whether there would be a Job Corps; now the only question was "How soon?" Downtown, the planning for the Job Corps had also accelerated rapidly during those six weeks.

In late May, Yarmolinsky, of course unaware at this time of his forthcoming excommunication, had fully recovered from his nearly fatal automobile accident, and had returned to the Poverty Task Force full time. Already key Task Force aides were quietly alerting Shriver and his deputy to the plight of Job Corps planning. By early June, both were convinced that something had to be done to beef up the Job Corps planning group. Because of his competing responsibilities as president of the Univer-

sity of Ohio, Vern Alden was spending less and less time in Washington; as a result, he was already out of touch with what was going on. And no one had assumed the leadership in his absence. But working under the stringent budget limitations that hobbled the entire Poverty Task Force, the question was how and where to find that additional strength.

Beginning in late April, representatives of the Office of Education had been sitting in on some of the Poverty Task Force planning sessions. First Education Commissioner Frank Keppel himself had attended these meetings, but gradually the responsibility had been passed on to other members of the senior staff. One of these observers was a Harvard University faculty member brought down to Washington by Frank Keppel to help plan the Cooperative Educational Research program administered by HEW. His name was Wade Robinson, and his particular interest was getting innovations in education more rapidly accepted by public schools.

Robinson, too, was upset by what he saw as the lack of direction in Job Corps planning, particularly on the educational side, and sat down late one evening in early June to lay some simple ideas before Frank Keppel. A few days later, Robinson found himself face to face over lunch with Adam Yarmolinsky going over these same proposals. Though time was short, the problem was not insol-

able as Robinson saw it. First there had to be tests designed to identify the educational deficiencies of the trainees. Then educational materials would have to be organized in reading, math, and other subjects which would permit each trainee to pick up his Job Corps education at whatever level the tests indicated. The materials should be organized so that trainees could study informally, at their own speed, testing themselves as they went along, and then progressing to the next level when they had mastered the previous work. At every level, trainees should have a wide variety of materials to select from, and the work would have to be keyed to their interests, as well as their educational capacities. In order to make sure the trainees stayed on track, and the educational work meshed with vocational training and work experience, each trainee would have to be intensively counseled during the entire time he was in the Job Corps. As a matter of fact, it would be this counseling which would be relied upon to tie together the entire Job Corps experience for each trainee.

All this meant that the staff at Job Corps centers would have to be specially selected and trained to handle this kind of educational system. The usual run-of-the-mill schoolteacher and counselor just wouldn't be able to adjust to this system so different from classes in public schools.

Yarmolinsky probed away in his usual incisive fashion. Why didn't the Office of Education take

charge of designing the entire educational program at Job Corps centers? Answer — because no one had asked them to. Could the Office of Education do the job? Answer — yes, if the Commissioner says so. A quick call to Frank Keppel resulted in a directive to Wade Robinson to draw up a plan of action, a proposed staff, and budget, using Office of Education funds. By the end of June, Robinson got the green light to go ahead, and almost overnight the Job Corps planning effort started to move. Alden rapidly phased out of the picture.

It took off and accelerated rapidly for several reasons. First, of course, the staff involved doubled and then tripled very quickly as Robinson brought in groups of reading, math, vocational education, testing, and counseling experts. Secondly, Keppel had insisted on a specific plan of action which detailed exactly what the Office of Education's responsibilities would be. This necessitated defining the responsibilities of the other members of the Job Corps planning group for recruiting trainees and for designing centers and tabulating the allowances of equipment and supplies. And thirdly, access to funds from the Office of Education permitted the letting of several contracts to run experimental pilot projects, and to start the preparation of a limited amount of new educational materials to be used in the Job Corps. But most important of all, Robinson's group in the Office of Education

started to give a sense of direction to the entire planning operation. The educational experts took the reins of Job Corps not by wrestling them by force from some competitor, but purely and simply because no one else volunteered to assume the leadership role. These circumstances were pivotal in shaping the direction the Job Corps was to follow.

As Robinson and his staff surveyed the scene in early July, they quickly came to a major decision. Most of their effort would have to be concentrated on designing and planning the conservation center program. These were clearly to be a one hundred percent federal operation; if there were to be any programs operating in the conservation centers at all, they would have to be designed by the Job Corps and run by people hired by the Job Corps who had been selected and trained according to standards and criteria and directives established by the Job Corps. Since the big urban training centers would be run by contract, Robinson reasoned that they could also be planned by contract — that whoever was going to operate the training centers could also be required to design the programs, and recruit and train the staff.

But the problem in early July was that no potential contractors were really yet at work on the problem. Two months of spadework with universities had unearthed mild but somewhat skeptical interest on the part of a dozen or so institutions,

and real interest from no more than two or three. And even those who were clearly interested felt that it might take as long as six months to prepare a complete proposal, while Shriver still wanted Job Corps centers to open in September or October. If there were to be urban centers open on Shriver's time schedule, it was obvious they would not be run by universities.

Suddenly and unexpectedly something happened which radically changed this situation. A letter arrived on Shriver's desk from Robert Chasen, president of the Federal Electric Corporation in Paramus, New Jersey. Shriver passed the letter on to Wade Robinson. To him, it was a godsend, for Chasen cited Federal Electric's more than a dozen years of experience in staffing and administering large-scale government programs, and then offered the corporation's services to develop Job Corps training programs; design, construct, and operate centers; train Job Corps staff; recruit and select trainees; or formulate administrative management systems for the Job Corps and its centers. The letter requested an early meeting to discuss the possibilities.

This letter was not based on any hasty decision by Federal Electric; for eight months earlier, Chasen had called together a special study group of top corporate staff. Their mission — figure out where the corporation could expand its business for profit over the next five years in the face of well-

known predictions that the Defense budget had reached a peak, and would level off or even fall. Their specific target — diversify operations from their present total reliance on Defense contracts to a position where at least half their income came from non-Defense sources. Federal Electric was not alone in facing this problem. Dozens of other corporations which had relied greatly on the burgeoning Defense budget for business in the early sixties were undertaking the same reappraisal of their plans — and profit possibilities.

The group quickly focused on two alternatives. The corporation might move into the regular commercial market, or it could look for ways of tapping other areas of governmental spending where major increases in activity seemed imminent. Looking at their capabilities and where the government would be spending more money over the next few years, one area looked especially fruitful — educational technology and manpower programs. Appropriations for aid to education under the Office of Education were skyrocketing under the persuasive influence of Frank Keppel, and Labor Department training programs also looked like a good bet for major increases.

So the call went out to the Washington office to collect all available material in federal government training programs. The search and sift process started. Pamphlets and brochures and reports of discussions and copies of legislation flowed in on

manpower training, vocational education, educational research, and — a few months later — on poverty. Among the documents which arrived in Paramus in March was the first official administration proposal describing the War on Poverty — the so-called Yellow Book (from the color of its cover). This sixty-eight-page description had been prepared by the Poverty Task Force and issued to Congress and the public on March 16, the day before Shriver first testified before the House Education and Labor Committee. It turned out to be a best seller; tens of thousands of copies were printed and distributed.

Chasen's study group pored through the Yellow Book, only to find that, in nearly every case, money could be funneled only to public agencies or private non-profit organizations. But there was one exception. The Job Corps section of the legislation specifically authorized "agreements with any Federal, State, or local agency or private organization." The door for corporate involvement seemed to be open at least a crack. The study group continued to follow the progress of Job Corps through the legislative maze.

By late June, it seemed likely that the Economic Opportunity Act would pass. And the Job Corps section, though rewritten, still seemed to permit contracts with private corporations for carrying out various facets of the program. Federal Electric took an analytical look at itself in relation to what

it could do for the Job Corps and concluded that it already had most of the in-house capacities that would be needed to get the program under way, or even to operate a Job Corps training center.

As a result, corporate management made a decision — try for a piece of the Job Corps business, and be prepared to commit whatever company resources were necessary to carry out a Job Corps contract. The first step to implement that decision was the letter which Shriver passed on to Wade Robinson.

Posthaste upon receipt of the letter, one of Wade Robinson's recent recruits to the Job Corps planning group, Lewis Eigen, was dispatched to Paramus for a meeting with Federal Electric staff. Eigen was an expert in programmed learning techniques and had experience with private industry as well as universities. The meeting raised more questions than it solved. For the fact was that no one in the Job Corps planning group had yet sat down to analyze systematically all the aspects and problems involved in operating a large training center located on a surplus military base. Eigen suggested that Federal Electric consider the possibility of operating a center on an unused portion of the old military reservation located at Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania near the New Jersey border. Federal Electric agreed to analyze the problem in depth, and then tabulate the questions they would need answers to for further discussion with the Job

Corps planning group. Ten days later, Federal Electric forwarded to Job Corps a list of 115 assumptions for confirmation or modification by the Job Corps covering every phase of the operation of a center, from education and training to community relations, medical support, and placement.

In a very real sense this move by Federal Electric made a major contribution to Job Corps planning. While *someone* on the Job Corps planning group had thought about nearly every question on Federal Electric's list, nowhere had the planning group collected these thoughts together. Furthermore, in many cases opinions differed within the planning group about how to handle different facets of center operation. Now, for the first time, a potentially willing Job Corps contractor categorically wanted to know what policy was going to be and the Job Corps planning group had to make decisions on a host of specific matters. What kind of work clothing will enrollees be issued, and how? Who will do the rehabilitation work on these old bases according to what criteria? To what extent can enrollees be used to help run and maintain the center by acting as cook's helpers, assistant security guards, etc.? Under what circumstances can enrollees be promoted to earn higher allowances? Do teachers in a Job Corps center need to hold teacher certificates from the state? Under what circumstances can a contractor discharge an enrollee? What happens when an enrollee gets in

trouble with local law enforcement authorities? The time for theorizing was past; Job Corps was starting to become operational.

On August 14, Federal Electric staff met with Job Corps officials and went down the list, item by item. With at least tentative decisions in their pockets on most items, the planners returned to Paramus to prepare the details of their proposal for operating a Job Corps center. And at Job Corps headquarters, the Federal Electric assumptions for operating a center as annotated at the August 14 meeting became the basic guidelines for talking with other would-be Job Corps contractors, university as well as corporate.

In between the discussions with Federal Electric at Paramus and Washington, Job Corps officials set out in search of other corporate contractors, since private industry seemed to be the best bet for getting urban centers under way on a timely schedule. One of the businessmen who had actively participated in the meetings of corporate executives which Shriver had eagerly set out to organize during the early months of the War on Poverty Task Force was Lyle Spencer, president of one of the best known educational systems corporations in the country, Science Research Associates. Eigen was therefore dispatched to Chicago to sound out Spencer. Within a few days, Job Corps was informed that SRA would also seriously consider submitting a proposal. By this time, two

universities, Rutgers and Oregon, had already expressed strong interest in running Job Corps centers, and were starting to work on proposal details. Litton Industries soon followed suit, and the log jam on men's center contractors was broken.

Though the Economic Opportunity Act passed by Congress was signed by the President and became law on August 20, the poverty program still had no funds; it was not until the second week in October that money became available to start operations, and then President Johnson personally dictated a moratorium on any grants or contract awards until after the November elections in order to avoid any basis for allegations that poverty funds were being used to buy votes. But by mid-November, at least a dozen potential contractors were working on proposals, including such companies as Philco and Sperry Rand, universities like Southern Illinois, and even the Texas State Education Agency. By the following spring, the line of contract applicants had quadrupled in length, and several more of the top corporations in the country had jumped on the bandwagon.

The challenge of planning the Job Corps women's center program fell on the shoulders of Dr. Jeanne Noble, an Associate Professor of Human Relations at New York University who had been asked to come to Washington by President Johnson as a potential candidate for several top

positions in government. She was also acquainted with Congresswoman Green, the prime mover behind the Job Corps for Women; in fact, it was Mrs. Green who recommended Dr. Noble to Sargent Shriver to head up the planning for this effort. Starting work part time in late May, she was given a free hand by Shriver to mobilize her own staff and set her own guidelines.

A strikingly attractive Negro, Jeanne Noble proved to be a determinedly independent and forceful leader, whose direction left a strong imprint on the shape and character of the women's center program. Gathering around her a staff of women drawn from the ranks of the military with a sprinkling of educators, Dr. Noble quickly came to the conclusion that women's centers would also have to be operated under contracts with universities, educational organizations, and other private groups. In order to focus national attention on the women's program and bring together a convocation of experts and representatives of organizations which could help plan and perhaps later implement the program, she conceived a new approach — a national conference to be held in Washington attended by educators, community organizers, leaders of women's groups, health experts, business executives, researchers, and any other persons who might be able to contribute ideas. With the personal endorsement and support of Mrs. Johnson

and Shriver, more than a hundred experts came to Washington on July 29 and 30 to hear about the plans for Job Corps women's centers, and then discuss how they should be organized and run.

The consensus of the conference — women's centers, first, would have to be small; no more than two hundred each, because girls couldn't adapt to mass living situations the way men do. And secondly, the centers should be located close to downtown urban areas, where the girls enrolled could have easy access to shops, cultural events, on-the-job-training opportunities and social relationships with the opposite sex. Medium-sized hotels and motels were mentioned as suitable locations. Otherwise the basic program design recommended by the conferees adhered closely to the concepts already posited for men's centers, except for the obvious addition of a strongly emphasized series of courses focusing on home and family life, including health, diet, interior decoration, and family recreation.

The concept of small centers located downtown was accepted as the fundamental planning philosophy for the distaff side of the Job Corps. But this decision immediately created an extremely serious problem which dominated the next year of transition from plans into operations.

It took nearly as much planning time and administrative effort to open up a small center as it

did to open up a large one. It was hoped that no fewer than two thousand men would occupy each men's center; but in order to house two thousand girls, the Job Corps women's program would have to open up ten centers. Since they were working against an initial target of seven thousand girls on board by the end of the first year, this meant finding thirty-five qualified and reliable contractors, thirty-five suitable buildings at reasonable cost, and thirty-five communities willing and able to support a women's training center. In fact, in order to achieve this target, one new women's center would have to have been opened *every ten days* throughout the entire first year of operation.

The problem was even more complicated than that. If corporations and universities were skeptical in the beginning about the risks and advantages of running a large men's training center, they were downright negative on women's centers. Corporate executives lined up for men's center business not so much for the relatively small immediate profit they got out of a contract (a maximum of 4.7 percent, or only a little over half of the going profit rate on defense contracts) as out of hope for future profits they would make out of manpower and education projects which they expected would flow their way. By running a Job Corps center, corporations thought they could develop more know-how about education and train-

ing which they could sell for high profits later.

That seemed to make sense when it came to training young men to be auto mechanics, electronic repairmen, or X-ray technicians. But corporate executives couldn't figure out how there was any future profit in learning how to teach girls about something called "home and family life."

There were very practical deterrents, too. The Job Corps had already decided that the cost of putting together a contract proposal to run a center had to be borne by the hopeful contractor; Job Corps would not pay any of these expenses, though they ranged from thirty to a hundred thousand dollars, depending upon the thoroughness with which the proposal spelled out the program. Each successful contractor, of course, received a management fee or profit allowance based upon the size of the contract, which was generally more than sufficient to offset his project proposal costs. But it took just as much effort to design an educational program for two hundred women as it did for two thousand men; it took just as much time to plan the administrative systems, the staff needs, and the equipment requirements. In short, a corporation had to risk just as much of its time, energy, and money to draw up a proposal for a large men's center as it did for a small women's center. But the contract for a small women's center would carry a price tag only one-fourth or one-fifth as

large as one for a men's center, and the profit or management fee involved would therefore be only one-fourth or one-fifth as big.

In just plain financial terms, fifty thousand dollars invested in project development costs might win a contractor a ten-million-dollar contract and a profit of four hundred thousand dollars or more for a men's center, or a contract of two million dollars and a profit of eighty thousand dollars for a women's center. Little wonder, then, that so long as there was a substantial hope for winning a men's center contract, corporations expressed little interest in applying to run women's centers.

Thus it was that the first contract applicants for Job Corps women's centers were for the most part either small organizations like local school boards which didn't have the administrative capacity to take on the formidable job of running a large men's center, or agencies like the YWCA which were concerned only with girls by the very nature of their mission.

These early planning guidelines accepted by the Job Corps women's centers Task Force, added to the late start and the lack of relevant experience to work from, made it manifestly impossible for this part of the Job Corps to get off the ground rapidly. Shriver himself realized this, and repeatedly argued for lifting the size limitation on women's centers. He reasoned that colleges, universities, and

prep schools in every state of the union seemed to have found ways to handle hundreds and even thousands of girls and young women in residential situations. Why was it that there had to be a ceiling of two hundred on Job Corps women's centers? The women, nevertheless, stuck to their principles, though they compromised to the extent of agreeing to consider centers as large as three hundred or so.

As a result, after the first eight months of operation, only 893 girls were enrolled at women's centers, while nearly ten thousand young men were studying and working in men's conservation and training centers. Moreover, the problem of getting a substantial number of sound proposals to run women's centers from qualified and reputable applicants was not solved until late spring of 1965. By this time nearly all the contracts for the operation of men's centers had been either awarded or substantially committed, and the large number of would-be contractors who had unsuccessfully submitted proposals for men's centers were told that their chances for getting a contract award for a women's center remained good. Many of these contractors then went back to the drawing boards and drew up proposals for the women's program. At the same time, the Job Corps revised its guidelines on the size of women's centers, and indicated a desire to contract for projects involving as many as one thousand girls. By fall of 1965, good appli-

cations for operating women's centers were being submitted at a modest but encouraging rate and the stage was set for substantial expansion of the women's program.

7

IT was Saturday, August 15. A week before, Congress had passed the President's poverty bill, and though no money had been appropriated yet to start operations, it was a foregone conclusion that money would be forthcoming. The Poverty Task Force had put in exactly six and a half months of work since the first of February; it had faced the awesome challenge of putting together a new, comprehensive program to combat poverty, and then it had worked to get that program passed by Congress, and to start to fill in the details of its operating structure.

The sun was shining outside, and the sweet breezes of at least temporary success were blowing despite the painful aftereffects still felt from the shock of the Yarmolinsky affair. In fact, most of the activity in the Task Force during the previous week centered around jockeying for positions so as to assure an invitation to the Rose Garden cere-

mony at which the President would sign the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and hand out the coveted pens to be framed and hung up on the wall as lifetime souvenirs. For a moment at least, the tension, the pressures, the demands, and the frustrations of the past six months were forgotten. But that moment did not last long.

Shriver sat at his desk in the Peace Corps building, the scene of so many of his successes over the last three years. His chair tilted back, he was enjoying what for him was an incredibly rare moment of just plain relaxed chatter on the state of affairs with two of his closest associates. Clearly he was just a little pleased, a luxury he rarely allows himself. For more than anything, Shriver is a man restlessly discontent, indefatigable in the pursuit of perfection, anguished if some aspect of the operations he is responsible for is not achieved better, faster, and more impressively than anyone has ever done the same thing before.

Everything in that office exuded the Shriver personality. On the door was tacked a large, block-printed sign quoting Boss Kettering of General Motors — BRING ME ONLY BAD NEWS; GOOD NEWS WEAKENS ME! Inside, a sparse allotment of unpretentious government-issue furniture gave no clue to the rank of the office's inhabitant. Plain walls painted in traditional government green likewise disclosed no evidence of power or prestige. For Shriver cared nothing for the physical appurte-

nances of rank; no fancy paneling, no built-in bookcases, no imposing portraits of past dignitaries. In fact, the casual way the half dozen or so chairs were usually scattered about the room left an impression of informality that neatly portrayed one characteristic of the man.

Nevertheless, the office also seemed infused with an air of restlessness and impatience. On the inside of the door were thumbtacked two more block-printed epigrams epitomizing the Shriver philosophy:

Nice guys don't win ball games.

There's no place on this team for good losers.

Flanking the desk was a side table on which sat a green Call Director telephone with at least two dozen lines, some to the White House, some to the secretarial staff just outside the door, some for outside calls, and some for internal communication to key Peace Corps officials. Next to that was the master squawk-box system which piped him directly into the offices of the dozen or so top office directors in the Peace Corps. The squawk box had been installed after a ludicrous incident in the early days of the Peace Corps when Shriver, calling one of his associate directors through the regular telephone system, had to spend five minutes identifying himself and spelling out his name before the subordinate's secretary would put Shriver through.

Against the wall in back of the desk hung several family photographs — a striking close-up of his wife Eunice, his daughter Maria on horseback, his son Bobby roughhousing, and a group picture of the family. Along the wall in front of the desk hung an enormous bulletin board on which might be tacked almost anything; the latest favorable or unfavorable news column; a hand-drawn graph showing Peace Corps applications received, week by week; some recent photographs showing Peace Corps volunteers; or anything else which seemed timely. The contents changed often. Standing off in the far corner were several souvenirs from one of Shriver's many overseas trips — a five-foot primitive guitar-like instrument from some native craftsman, and some African carvings.

Lining two sides of the office along the floor lay the framed or mounted honorary degrees or citizen's awards which the Peace Corps Director had received. Stacked two, three, and four deep they looked as if they had just been moved in, or were ready to be shipped out somewhere; no one could tell. Recently two new acquisitions had been added to the office decor. One was a massive gray-green, black, and red bullfight done in a flamboyantly impressionist style crossing El Greco with Van Gogh; more than a little gaudy, it somehow projected an air of uneasy urgency across the entire room. The other was the ultimate contrast — a glass masterpiece of uselessness that had come

along with an honorary degree awarded Shriver by Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. Looking a little bit like a model of a Buddhist temple, this exceptionally fragile piece of craftsmanship lay on a bed of velvet inside a closed glass case. It stood out principally because it seemed to violate the quintessential character of utilitarian practicality and impatient vigor which was projected by the rest of the office. Amid its surroundings, it was a permanent enigma, perhaps symbolic in its own way of the man in whose office it rested.

Suddenly a line on the Call Director rang insistently; Shriver reached over and picked up the receiver. It was Bill Moyers at the White House. That list of twenty-two Job Corps conservation center sites that Shriver had sent over last week. Could they be announced today? Shriver protested. He had sent the list over to find out *how* the White House wanted to handle the announcement, but it wasn't ready to be made public yet. Not a single governor, Congressman, or Senator had been notified. No press kits had been prepared. Yes, Interior and Agriculture had helped work up the list, but no one had done anything to prepare the nearby communities for accepting a Job Corps center. Besides, there was no money to start construction, and long delays might ensue before any of these centers actually opened.

Moyers signed off with an "O.K." Shriver hung up, slapped his hand on the desk, and pressed the

intercom buzzer for the secretaries outside. No response. He had momentarily forgotten that they had come in, finished their work left over from the regular work week, and been excused from further Saturday duty. Even Shriver's super-faithful executive assistant for nearly twenty years was off for the afternoon. All working papers and files were carefully locked up, secure from prying eyes. No copy of the list that had been sent over to the White House could be found. So a call was put in to the Job Corps planning group, and sure enough, several of the faithful were there working. One found a copy of the list of the proposed conservation center sites and dictated it over the phone.

Actually the list was the result of about two months' work between Job Corps and the conservation agencies, and had been boiled down from the more than three hundred possible sites that Interior and Agriculture had suggested in May. It was absolutely true that little groundwork had been done in the local communities; local forest rangers and park superintendents had been restrained from any extensive contacts pending passage of the Act and final decisions on sites. In fact, most of the conservation agency field staff on site knew little about the Job Corps except that it was going to be something like the old Civilian Conservation Corps. If put on the spot, they would have had difficulty giving any details at all about the plans for operating each center.

A few minutes later the White House phone rang again. It was Larry O'Brien, the legislative aide, to say that the President was holding a press conference, and was in the process at that very moment of reading the list of proposed conservation centers to the gathered assemblage of reporters. Shriver blanched and hung up.

If, during the next four hours, a casual observer had walked into Shriver's office on the fifth floor of the Peace Corps building and watched what was going on for a few minutes, he probably would have concluded that he had happened on a rehearsal for some new comic opera, rather than the nerve center for the Peace Corps and the War on Poverty. The twenty-two camps announced were located in eighteen different states, stretching from Massachusetts to California; the sites proposed were on federal lands administered by five different bureaus in the Departments of Agriculture and Interior; and in most cases, there were not just one, but several communities nearby who would be affected by the establishment of a center. The announcement of the first War on Poverty activity to hit each of these localities was sure to create a splash—and with less than three months to go until elections and the poverty program at the top of the new bulletins, that splash couldn't help but take on a political coloration.

The wire services were already tripping their reports across the nation. It wouldn't be long before

local reporters and officials would start calling eighteen governors, thirty-six Senators, and nearly two dozen Congressmen for more information — which they would be in no position to give because they didn't even know about the announcement themselves. Public officials, by nature, dislike to be taken by surprise by major announcements affecting their territory, especially in the middle of a political campaign. In this case, the list of governors included a conservative southern Democrat, Albertis Harrison of Virginia, as well as a long list of Republicans — Nelson Rockefeller of New York and William Scranton of Pennsylvania; Paul Fannin, a Goldwater-style conservative now running for the Senate from Arizona; Tim Babcock of Montana, an outspoken critic of the Democratic administration in Washington; and the youthful, up-and-coming Mark Hatfield of Oregon.

Somehow word from Shriver's office would have to get to as many of these seventy-odd public officials as could be located on a Saturday afternoon in midsummer. After notifying Agriculture Secretary Freeman and Interior Secretary Udall, Shriver and his two aides started placing telephone calls in bunches with the hardy and enterprising White House telephone operators. And soon the answers came straggling back in, scattered at first but then aflood three, four, and five at a time. Many of these officials were reached immediately. Governors stacked up on the telephone hold buttons behind

Congressmen, and Congressmen behind Senators in a confused tide of incoming replies. At one point in the middle of one of his most ardent sales pitches, Sarge's face suddenly turned blank. Looking over to one side he cupped his hand over the mouthpiece and half-whispered, "Who is this that I am talking to? I've forgotten!"

But many officials couldn't be reached by telephone and their whereabouts painted a fascinating spectrum of the lives of politicians on a summer Saturday afternoon. Predictably, the golf links had drawn some, and others were simply "unavailable." But one governor was described as "in Indian costume on a white horse leading a parade." Another was downstate dedicating a dam. But the top prize went to the aide who said blandly, "I'm sorry, the Governor can't be reached because he is out shooting antelopes!"

Meanwhile, Agriculture and Interior staff sent word out to their forest rangers and park superintendents. To some the announcement did not come as a complete surprise. Most had been involved in suggesting his territory as a possible location. But the Job Corps Task Force at this point still had no money, and no time to prepare briefings. Many major decisions were still left pending, and there was precious little information to hand out to tell local officials what the Job Corps was all about.

Nowhere was this better exemplified than in the "Battle of Yorktown," which raged around the pro-

posed Triple Shrine center in southeastern Virginia to be operated by the Job Corps through the National Park Service of the Interior Department. In theory, it sounded great. Located near Williamsburg, Yorktown, and Jamestown, Virginia, where an active National Park was already located, the Job Corpsmen would be housed in some old barracks at a nearby Naval Weapons Station tentatively slated to be torn down.

Stan Abbott, the local national park superintendent, planned to use the Job Corpsmen to restore the original site of the Battle of Yorktown, building walkways and tourist trails, installing descriptive historical plaques, and refurbishing the entire Colonial Parkway drive from Yorktown to Jamestown in the colonial tradition. The center itself was scheduled initially to house only one hundred enrollees, the smallest size of center Job Corps planners felt was economical. Compared to the enormous federal government installations like the Norfolk Naval Base, the Newport News shipyards, and several local Air Force bases, the impact of a hundred Job Corps enrollees would seemingly be insignificant. Moreover, the Corpsmen would be working directly on projects which would expand the lucrative tourist trade, the main source of local income outside of the presence of the federal government.

But that was not the case. By the following Tuesday, the word was out in the community and

lead articles ran in the Richmond and Newport News daily papers serving the Triple Shrine area.

On Thursday, Governor Harrison held his weekly news conference in Richmond and made it clear that he was less than enthusiastic about the whole program. In response to questions, he commented that the poverty program "is in being . . . so regardless of how we feel about it, a large sum of money is going to be spent to alleviate certain conditions . . . if there are such conditions which exist in Virginia, then Virginia should participate." Therefore he had no intention of "arbitrarily and capriciously" blocking the operation of any projects which might be proposed in the state. "Don't get the idea we are going to say 'no' just because it is a part of a program we don't agree with," he concluded.

And, of course, the Governor was in a position to play a decisive role. On the Senate floor, exactly four weeks before, Senator George Smathers of Florida had sponsored an amendment to the Job Corps section of the legislation which provided that a governor could veto *any* proposed Job Corps center in his state. Shriver had carefully explained this to Governor Harrison over the telephone the previous Saturday, and so the Governor knew he had the power to stop the Triple Shrine center. Local leaders quickly realized this protection existed.

The pot simmered for several days. National at-

tention was being drawn toward the Democratic National Convention up and coming the next week. Stan Abbott came to Washington, along with other conservation agency personnel who would have centers under their jurisdiction, for a briefing on the proposed new program. By the end of the following week, Abbott was able to fill in a few more details on the Job Corps. The enrollees would come from many different states, from both rural and urban areas, and would be supervised by a staff of work supervisors from the Park Service, and teachers assigned by the Job Corps. The notion that enrollees would be selected from the ranks of juvenile delinquents was mistaken.

But opposition to the center solidified rapidly. By the end of the week, it became known that the York County Board of Supervisors was opposed, four to one. The Chamber of Commerce came out against the center, arguing that it should be located nearer areas which were poverty-stricken, instead of in a place which was generally prosperous. The local newspaper took up the same, not entirely illogical argument.

But these were not the real arguments which swayed the local citizenry. What they feared was an onslaught of out-of-state Negroes — especially those who might be shipped in from northern ghettos where there had already been racial unrest and scattered riots. What they feared even more was that this population would be loosed evenings

and weekends on the local towns, unsupervised, uncontrolled, and insensitive to what was euphemistically called "local customs." This last term embodied the whole social framework of a society which was still segregated, to most practical purposes, a condition to which most local Negroes acquiesced. As one citizen said, "We don't want a bunch of hoodlums out of Harlem." The chairman of the County Board of Supervisors even said he thought the attitude would be different if only young men from Virginia were assigned to the camp at Yorktown.

Over the weekend, Shriver tried to calm these fears. "Every member of the Job Corps will be carefully screened and will be the kind of American who could be welcome anywhere in the United States. Job Corps camps will not be composed of all Negroes, or of all Spanish-speaking Americans, or of all rural white people, or of all anything else." Bluntly he added that critics were "grossly misinformed about the Job Corps. There is no substance to their worries."

But the feelings were not all one-sided. The United Church Women, led by their president, Mrs. J. R. Turnage, pleaded for citizens to become fully informed before making up their minds. "Yes," she said, "there is some risk involved in bringing these young men into our community, but if York County is so insecure that 100, and possibly a maximum of 200 young men can wreck our

moral fiber, then we should succumb to fear. We cannot be free when we are bound by fear."

Back from the Democratic Convention, and in Williamsburg for a conference of educators, Governor Harrison confirmed that he would "veto any part of this program where the local community objects." And the local delegate to the state legislature added, "I'd say the outlook for having a camp in York County is dim. The people are dead set against it." Shriver's explanations failed to change local opinion substantially and local citizens remained opposed nine to one according to one estimate. "I would like to see Yorktown stay peaceful and quiet as it is now," said one small business proprietor; and another just said flatly, "We don't want any integrated camp here."

The following Monday, the Board of Supervisors in neighboring James City voted unanimously to oppose the Job Corps center. Petitions started to circulate in York County, amassing signatures which rapidly totaled several hundred. Meanwhile, Shriver promised Congressman Thomas Downing in Washington, in whose district the camp would have been located, that "no one is going to force this camp down anybody's throat," and accepted the Congressman's suggestion that the York County Board of Supervisors come to Washington for a briefing and discussion of the Job Corps and the proposed center at Yorktown.

This moderated local tempers somewhat, and

one local editor, noting that 50 percent of the local jobs derived directly from federal employment at the big shipyards and military bases nearby, asked "whether Tidewater, the recipient of so many good monetary tidings from Washington, should not ask what it can do for the country."

On Wednesday, a delegation of seven local officials traveled to Washington to meet with Shriver in the office of Congressman Downing on Capitol Hill. Shriver could not attend at the last minute, and passed the responsibility for handling the meeting to Edgar May, who had joined the Poverty Task Force staff several months earlier after the publication of his book, *The Wasted Americans*, and three other aides. Though the meeting lasted two and a half hours, little was accomplished, except to restate the positions already taken by each side. The York Countians expressed concern about the kinds of young men who would be assigned to the center, and re-emphasized the problem of local hostility to the center. May repeated Shriver's assurances that no center would be established against the wishes of local citizens. The Shriver spokesmen did, however, make one new assurance — that not more than 35 percent of the center enrollment was expected to be Negro.

Actually, at this point in time, both Shriver and the York County Board of Supervisors were striving hard to prevent the issue from coming to a head. It was clear to Shriver's staff and the Na-

tional Park Service directorship in Washington that a popular vote now or in the next few days would go overwhelmingly against the Job Corps. Though none of the communities near any of the other twenty-two Job Corps centers announced had reacted as antagonistically as Yorktown, it was known that they were watching the "Battle of Yorktown" with intense interest. A formal defeat at Yorktown might serve to strengthen local opposition elsewhere, leading to a succession of defeats before the Job Corps had even gotten off the ground. On the other hand, the Board of Supervisors was somewhat awed by the fact that they were in the national limelight. For a County Board of Supervisors in an area where federal employment was the mainstay of the economy to flout Washington and the President openly by going against the Job Corps center seemed unnecessarily risky, so long as they could be assured it would not be established without their approval. So the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors announced: "We don't expect to take any final action on this matter until the people have been fully informed and until their wishes and desires are made known to the Board."

On Thursday evening, the day after their meeting in Washington, the York County Board of Supervisors held a regularly scheduled meeting; before the meeting, they had unanimously agreed not to consider or take any action on the Job Corps

center. Nevertheless, several hundred supporters and opponents of the center appeared at the Thursday night meeting and sparked a half-hour debate. National Park Service observers estimated that opponents outnumbered supporters three to one. Though opponents pressed hard for an immediate decision, the Board of Supervisors stood fast on their agreement not to act, and the meeting was finally adjourned. Though the debate continued on for several weeks between various local groups, it was clear to all that the Job Corps center at Yorktown was dead. The Board of Supervisors never actually took a formal vote and the Job Corps never formally proposed the Triple Shrine to Governor Harrison.

The "Battle of Yorktown" was the first encounter between Job Corps and elements in a local community which opposed a center. This battle was clearly lost. But surprisingly, this defeat did *not* set a pattern. Of the other twenty-one camps in the first announcement, twenty were approved by governors and are now in operation. The one remaining center was canceled by Shriver himself when he found out the Interior Department had selected what seemed to be an absolutely ludicrous site — Death Valley, California. While governors have exercised their legal veto power several times to block other kinds of poverty projects, no governor has ever vetoed a Job Corps center. In fact, the

Yorktown incident drew the attention of local officials in poverty-stricken southwestern Virginia, who actively and later successfully sought the establishment of a Job Corps conservation center in the Jefferson National Forest.

Nevertheless, the "Battle of Yorktown" is still a significant landmark in the history of the Job Corps. For it ripped open once again the issue of what kind of person the program was designed to reach and enroll. Was the Job Corps really designed for "the kind of American who could be welcome anywhere in the United States," as Shriver said, and would he be "carefully screened to make certain that he was of good moral character and sincerely desired a chance to prepare himself for the responsibilities of citizenship," as the Shriver-approved information release prepared by the Department of Interior stated? Or was the Job Corps designed for "those whose background, health, and education make them least fit for useful work," as the President had outlined in his message to Congress in March, as well as young men who "are alienated and disadvantaged, both economically and culturally," and who "have had failure as a constant companion," as other Job Corps information releases and guidelines noted?

As the Yorktown incident was coming to a close, another important step in the history of the Job Corps was being taken. Since the beginning of the summer, the Job Corps and the United States Em-

ployment Service had been holding discussions on how to recruit and screen potential enrollees for the Job Corps.

The outlook for a short, friendly negotiation had never been very good. In the first place, Shriver felt strongly that the Employment Service was an archaic, unimaginative, stodgy, ineffective organization incapable of molding and shaping itself to the demands of the new task, which had to be carried out quickly. Shriver was very much in favor of bypassing the Employment Service altogether and using local agencies, or even units run directly by Job Corps to do the recruiting and screening. He was totally and unalterably opposed to giving the Employment Service a complete monopoly on Job Corps recruiting and screening.

The Employment Service, on the other hand, was part of the Labor Department, and the Labor Department was the agency which had worked long and hard for the passage of the Youth Conservation Corps, and then suddenly found it renamed and shifted to the new and untried Office of Economic Opportunity. Furthermore, working in this new agency running "their" program was a cadre of intellectual, egghead educators who really didn't understand very much about how government worked — what could be done, and what couldn't. The bureaucrats and the eggheads talked different languages, and often had difficulties translating from one into the other.

On top of all this, the Labor Department had just announced a major new program calling for the establishment of "Youth Opportunity Centers" in slum neighborhoods in upward of a hundred cities. In inside government circles, these were viewed as the Labor Department's answer to the poverty program's Community Action agencies which would be funded with poverty program grants to provide comprehensive services, sometimes in direct competition with Employment Service manpower programs. The Community Action planners on the Poverty Task Force and the Youth Opportunity Center program administrators in the Labor Department were locked in a head-to-head jurisdictional battle, to which there seemed to be no early solution. And so long as that battle was going on, the Employment Service felt under no compunction to complete its negotiations with Job Corps.

Surveying this bureaucratic combat as a kind of referee (with certain biases of its own) was the Budget Bureau in the Executive Office of the President. The particular biases of the Budget Bureau were twofold. First, on behalf of the President, who had a persistent concern about keeping the number of people on the federal government payroll low, the Bureau wanted to assure that agencies didn't set up duplicating systems to do the same job; in short, the Bureau was strongly opposed to any proposal which involved the Job Corps setting up a

series of local offices to recruit and screen enrollees, since this could, at least in theory, be done by Employment Service more efficiently with fewer additional people on the payroll. In informal moments, the Budget Bureau would also admit that it hoped that involving the Employment Service in a new program like the Job Corps would pump some life into it.

But the Budget Bureau also had a second, more substantive concern. The Bureau's analysts believed strongly in the concept of a one-stop service center for youth. This meant that a young man or woman seeking employment or training should be able to go to one place, get tested and evaluated, and then be told about *all* the different kinds of opportunities available, only one of which might be the Job Corps. One fundamental weakness of any proposal to set up independent Job Corps screening offices was that the Job Corps was in no position to provide this kind of "one-stop" service.

After watching the combatants joust for most of the summer, the Budget Bureau finally stepped in and forced a temporary compromise solution during the first week in September. Under the compromise, the Job Corps would set eligibility standards for entrance into the Job Corps with advice from the Labor Department. The Job Corps agreed to rely primarily on the Employment Service for recruiting and screening enrollees, except that the Job Corps could undertake special recruiting

efforts after joint consultation. The Employment Service and Job Corps would cooperate to evaluate present and future Employment Service capabilities, state by state and area by area. The possibility of selecting some local agencies other than the Employment Service in certain cities was left open.

The agreement with the Employment Service covered only the recruitment and screening of male enrollees for the Job Corps. Special arrangements were already being worked out to utilize another channel for carrying the Job Corps message to young women.

At the National Conference on the Proposed Job Corps for Women held in late July, Jeanne Noble had suggested that women's organizations might play a primary role in helping to recruit and screen young women for the Job Corps. Within two weeks, the National Council of Catholic Women, the National Council of Jewish Women, the National Council of Negro Women, and the United Church Women had expressed an active interest in following up on this suggestion. Shriver liked the idea, and the four groups got a green light to go ahead and draw up plans. These four groups had already worked together cooperatively on several civil rights problems in the South, and it was therefore quite natural that they should cooperate in assisting to implement the Women's Job Corps.

In December, the four organizations incorpo-

rated to form a non-profit agency called Women in Community Service (WICS), and a month later, WICS signed a contract with Job Corps under which they assumed the responsibility for handling the recruiting and screening of girls for the women's centers.

At this point in time, the Job Corps planning group had planned to accomplish the screening and assigning of trainees to Job Corps centers in much the same way the Selective Service operates the draft to select men for the Armed Forces. Based on a number of factors, such as the number of disadvantaged teen-agers, state by state quotas would be established; then, according to the number of spaces that were expected to become available in Job Corps centers, "calls" would be issued to the various State Employment Services to produce the required number of recruits.

But suddenly this all changed. Until mid-October, Shriver himself had spent little time working on the plans for the Job Corps. Most of his attention had been consumed by the problem of getting the authorization and appropriation bills through Congress, and in recruiting name talent for the top positions in the program. Furthermore, political pundits had been guessing for months that Shriver's mission was simply to get the poverty bill through Congress, and that some other person would be selected to run the program. Shriver himself had remained in the dark. But now the President indi-

cated that he intended to appoint Shriver as head of the poverty program in addition to his responsibilities as Director of the Peace Corps.

With the bills through Congress and now in full knowledge that he would have to run the poverty program, Shriver started to dig into operational issues through thrice-weekly senior staff meetings held in a crowded and dilapidated room in the even more dilapidated third-class hotel which now housed most of the offices of the poverty program staff.

Shriver ran these staff meetings with a unique flair all his own; this kind of session had been one of the primary tools he used for planning and running the Peace Corps so successfully, and now he began to apply this tool to the poverty program. A Shriver staff meeting was never a dull experience. In the first place, he chose those who should attend not on the basis of rank or position, but on the basis of their analytical ability and willingness to speak out on a wide variety of subjects; he sought to collect together at these meetings the best brainpower in the program. At each meeting the assembled group focused on one of the most immediate operational issues which had to be faced and acted on in the next few days or weeks. Those who would be directly responsible for taking whatever action might be decided upon laid out their thoughts and plans. And then the assembled

“brains” were openly encouraged to attack these plans, reshape them, add to them, or even completely destroy them. What Shriver was after was to subject the individual thoughts and plans of his top staff to the roughest tests of imaginativeness, feasibility, efficiency, practicality, and political salability that his closest associates could devise.

For Shriver, these staff meetings had enormous value. He got a good chance to see his staff members, particularly the new ones, perform in combat. He himself got deep down into the guts of the major problems the new program faced, for the meetings often lasted two or three hours. He knew that the entire top staff of the agency would get a chance to hear what was going on in other parts of the program with which they might not be directly involved. And everyone got a chance to see and hear the boss in action, and thereby absorb some of the philosophy and sense of direction which he wanted to instill.

While none of these sessions actually ever reached the point where physical violence occurred, the verbal mayhem which was inflicted on various staff members from meeting to meeting was appalling. To the slow-thinking, the inarticulate, the overly visionary, the diehard but impractical idealist or even just the plain average administrator, no mercy was shown. The only predictable element of Shriver staff meetings was that at

least one person would be cross-examined ruthlessly and in detail on some facet of the poverty program's operation or administration.

It was in this arena that Job Corps recruiting plans first came up for discussion with Shriver, first through Wade Robinson, and later through Otis Singletary, the new Job Corps Director whom Shriver had lured to Washington on leave of absence from his position as chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Shriver didn't like what he heard. Already disgruntled at the extent to which the Job Corps was already committed to rely on the Employment Service for screening, he tore into the so-called "quota" system. How was the Job Corps ever going to show Congress what the potential need might be for Job Corps centers if the number of applicants was always restricted to just the number of openings in centers over the next few weeks? How were the words "Job Corps" ever going to come to mean anything to poor kids across the entire country if you only let a few at a time in on the secret that it existed? And everyone knew the Employment Service didn't really get out into rural areas or into deep slums — how were they ever going to hear about the Job Corps there? Was the Job Corps — one of the great hopes for the poverty program — going to get across to poor youngsters if it was represented to them by the same tired old people that these kids had found to be of no help before?

Where was the sense that this was really a national program — that it was the *country* that was doing this, not just the state, and especially not the State Employment Service?

The debate raged through not just one, but several staff sessions throughout the month of October. Shriver had one advantage, however. He had already gone through the experience of setting up a national recruiting program for the Peace Corps, and a highly successful one at that. One basic element of the Peace Corps recruiting system was a relatively simple application, which was distributed nationwide through thousands of outlets. When filled out, this application was sent directly to Washington, and correspondence with applicants all came directly from Washington.

As Peace Corps Director, Shriver believed anyone of age should be able to apply for the Peace Corps, and those applications should come directly to Washington to emphasize the *national* character of the effort. As poverty program Director, Shriver felt the same way about the Job Corps. Any boy or girl meeting the age requirements and living in poverty should be able to apply for the Job Corps, and that application should come directly to Washington because the Job Corps was a *national* program.

The Job Corps recruiting staff was staggered by the idea of a system through which teen-agers living in poverty could apply directly to Washington

to get into the Job Corps. Some asked, "What will Congress and the public think if there turn out to be thousands more applying than we have room for?" Shriver's reply was simple. "You get me all the applications you can get, and you let me worry about how to handle Congress and the public!" Others questioned how the Job Corps could ever get back in touch with applicants, since they almost certainly wouldn't have phones, many poor families don't even receive mail, and poor teen-agers in urban areas often don't even spend much time at home. Who was going to go out and find the applicants and tell them when and where to go for testing and screening? To say the least, the Job Corps staff was unenthusiastic about the national application concept.

But Shriver was determined, and none of the Job Corps arguments shook his conviction. So the Job Corps added to its recruitment packets a small folded postcard, half of which carried the message "Get paid while you work, learn, and travel" and the other half of which could be filled out with name, address, and age. The cards came in two colors — pink for the girls and blue for the boys.

By this time it was mid-November, and the conservation agencies were already hard at work readying the first rural centers for enrollees. The pressure was on to get them open as soon as possible. Shriver even hoped that some trainees could be brought on board before Christmas. So the Job

Corps rushed the preparation of the recruiting kits containing descriptive pamphlets, applications, fact sheets, and film strips. These materials had been prepared to stress the attractive aspects of Job Corps. Photographs showed young men in "hard hats" operating bulldozers, running power saws, and driving trucks. Other pictures showed them working on automobile engines, or welding. Recreational opportunities described included swimming and many other kinds of sports. And they showed friendly and understanding teachers and staff members who appeared eager to help. Fact sheets promised "intensive and specialized vocational training" at the larger urban centers in such fields as data processing, automotive mechanics, and heavy equipment operation.

During the first week in December the materials were tested for "audience reaction" in Baltimore and two rural Appalachian counties; the results were positive. So the kits were distributed by the thousands in late December to the fifty State Employment Services and to other organizations which could be expected to get the information on the Job Corps out to the "target population." At least two dozen private voluntary organizations, like the Urban League, the Council of the Southern Mountains, the YMCA's and YWCA's, the Boys' Clubs of America, and all the major religious action groups, got briefed on the Job Corps and received recruitment kits.

Then Washington sat back and waited. Early in the Task Force days, some of the experts had predicted that it would take a really vigorous recruiting campaign during the first few months of Job Corps operations to convince teen-agers to leave home and go to a conservation or urban training center hundreds of miles away; the Job Corps, they predicted, might even have trouble filling all its openings for trainees during the first few months until the ice was broken and the idea of getting into the Job Corps caught on. During the hearings and in the floor debates, Congressmen and Senators had openly questioned whether disadvantaged youth, no matter how badly off they might be at home, would volunteer for a program of work and training in the woods, or on some old military base. And, in fact, there was nothing to *prove* that they would. Now the Job Corps would find out.

It didn't take long. By the end of the first week in January, the little blue cards started to flow in, along with letters scrawled or awkwardly printed in nearly illegible penmanship. The next week the first trickle of mail had become a steady stream, and by the third week in January, the stream had become a deluge. By the end of January, applications and letters from potential enrollees asking for information were flooding in at a rate of fifteen thousand a week. Ten weeks after the recruitment effort started, applications totaled well over one hundred thousand, and by the end of June more

than three hundred thousand inquiries and applications had been received. There was no longer any question about the demand for the kind of program Job Corps portrayed in its recruiting literature. The question now became whether the Job Corps could live up to its own advertising.

8

ONE of these three hundred thousand applications came from a tall, lanky, seventeen-year-old Kentuckian, born and raised deep in the hills of Appalachia. His name was Chester Maggard.

Chester is a Kentuckian, not just by birth, but by nature as well. For the hills of eastern Kentucky breed a special kind of man — quiet, introspective, given neither to many words nor extremes of emotion. The men of eastern Kentucky are nevertheless as ruggedly individualistic as the hills they live in. They tend to react to the pressures of modern life — the fads and fashions — with a blend of passive defiance and stoic skepticism. Taciturn but observant, interested but not involved, a little aloof but not unfriendly, these are men who would choose a rugged but meager existence as individuals in the hills to faceless anonymity in the city.

Chester had all these qualities. But at seventeen, he was also up a dead end and he knew it. He

had done fairly well in school in the little town of Keavy, even though he got involved in his share of boyhood pranks, and would really rather have spent the time out in the woods hunting or fishing. But while he was in the ninth grade, his parents separated, and life at home became troubled. He caught the car-bug, and school seemed pretty dull compared to the lives of kids he knew who had already dropped out and acquired beat-up jalopies to cruise through town in. Even though his marks were still mostly B's and C's, Chester dropped out of school in the middle of the tenth grade and headed for his grandmother's in Florida. For the next few months, he kicked around Florida and Maryland on various odd jobs, and then finally ended up back at Whitesburg, Kentucky, not too far from home. There his uncle ran the Camp Branch General Store, and Chester worked part time as a clerk and helped keep the accounts. Keeping the accounts was in itself an education on the economics of poverty. For the customers numbered many on welfare, who came in toward the end of each month to buy the basic necessities of subsistence on the tab until the next relief check came. Many other customers were straining to raise families on an income of forty or fifty dollars a week.

The message of these living object lessons was not lost on Chester. He knew that was where he was headed, too, unless something happened.

Early in December, one of the employees from the State Employment Service office in Whitesburg, who had just been briefed by the special Job Corps recruiting team from Washington, came by the Camp Branch General Store to do some shopping. While there, he dropped off some of the folders and an application for the Job Corps. After talking with his uncle, Chester applied. Later he was called down to the temporary Job Corps screening center set up in an attic downtown in Whitesburg. It was so temporary that Chester and a few other teen-agers who showed up had to help carry furniture to get it set up before they could be screened. Many forms, lots of questions, and several tests later, Chester had completed everything that Anne Vermillion, the Employment Service screener, knew was supposed to be filled out. And so he asked what the Job Corps was. "Chester," she said, "I can only tell you what they told me; that's all I know." She went through the folders with him describing conservation centers and men's urban centers, how much money he would be paid, what kinds of training he could get, and what would be expected of him.

The forms went to Washington. And Chester waited.

Early in the evening of January 13, Chester came back to his uncle's store and learned that he had a telephone call from Anne Vermillion. He had been accepted by the Job Corps, and must be

ready to leave the next day at one o'clock; he would be going to a place called Catoctin somewhere in Maryland. So the next day, packing most of the clothes he owned into a small bag, he was driven to nearby Bristol, where he met nine other new recruits from Kentucky. All of them were a little scared, not just because of the unknown future they faced, but also because they were suddenly deluged with reporters and photographers pressing in around them for pictures and a story on the very first enrollees coming into the Job Corps. The group was three hours late getting started for the train which took them overnight by Pullman to Baltimore. In the early morning hours, just at first daylight, the train pulled in; Chester had traveled outside of Kentucky a little — to Ohio and even to Florida to visit relatives. But some of the others had virtually never been more than a few miles from home before; several had never seen a city, and now suddenly overnight they were walking down the bare and dimly lit platforms of a railroad station nearly a thousand miles away from home. It was dawn, but gray clouds kept the sun from casting either light or warmth on the scene as they stepped outside to board a waiting chartered bus.

The bus engines roared, and the bus pulled slowly away through the city streets, still mostly empty of either traffic or people. Across the city, the bus pulled up to an Employment Service office where the rest of the first thirty Job Corps recruits

waited. Drawn from West Virginia and the Baltimore area, they were likewise the products of the test recruiting drive undertaken by the Job Corps six weeks earlier. One of the Negroes, later a popular "cat" among the Corpsmen, bounced down the aisle, shaking hands right and left. But most, still feeling a little overawed and ill-at-ease, filed onto the bus slowly and quietly, selecting a seat and dropping into it wordlessly to look out the window first, and then to steal a glance at the rest of the strange and equally uncertain faces which filled the vehicle.

Again the engines roared, and the bus moved off slowly at first through the city streets, and then out into the open countryside, carrying its cargo of hope and anticipation and anxiety.

Two hours later, the bus turned off the main highway, and soon pulled up near a collection of one-story buildings blanketed with snow; this was Camp Catoctin. The Job Corps was under way. The first center was open.

The trainees slowly filed off the bus, each with some clothes packed in whatever was available when he left home. For some it was a new cloth flight bag bought for the occasion; for others it was an old suitcase; for a few it was nothing more than a brown paper bag. Some had a couple of extra shirts and maybe a pair of pants. Several had practically nothing — because they owned practically nothing. One had traveled from Kentucky in sub-

freezing weather in blue jeans and a T-shirt; that was all he had.

And they looked around. Chester immediately wondered how far the nearest town was; Catoctin looked as if it was really out in the sticks. Another glanced around and asked one of the men standing nearby where the fences were; he had expected the center to be closed in somehow, like a concentration camp, with guards. But mostly what they saw was snow and more snow. It was a cold beginning.

The new trainees may have felt awkward and unsure, but they were no more so than the three dozen Job Corps staff members who met them. At Catoctin, staff members from the first group of Job Corps conservation centers scheduled to open had been gathered for training. For several weeks they had been lectured about disadvantaged youth — how they acted, what they thought, what motivated them, who they feared, and who they respected. All that had been theory. Now suddenly here were thirty genuine products of poverty. The days of theory were over. Now they had to act.

It was lunchtime, so the first thing the new arrivals and their new mentors did was head for the mess hall and a big lunch. The new trainees were surprised; the food was good, there was plenty of it, all you could eat in fact, and the place was clean. Afterward, they were assigned to their rooms — four in each — and got their first cloth-

ing allowance which consisted mostly of surplus Defense Department work clothing — heavy khaki shirts and pants, a pair of heavy work boots.

All in all, the Corpsmen agreed the center wasn't bad. The bunks were comfortable, and many had rarely had a chance to sleep in a bed alone before. The guys on the center staffs in training seemed pretty nice. The buildings were still being finished inside, and there wasn't much equipment, but they were told there would be pool tables and Ping-Pong and television and a record player. Somehow a couple of guitars had arrived at the center, and a couple of enrollees were glad to show off their musical skills that evening. Job Corps looked like a pretty good deal.

During the next couple of days, the new Corpsmen were subjected to a barrage of tests — reading, math, general IQ, and aptitude. And they also found out for the first time that two thirds of them would not stay at Catoctin. For the Job Corps staff planned to divide these first thirty up into three groups to form the nucleus for three centers. Ten of them would stay at Catoctin. Ten would go to Arkansas to a place called Ouachita, and ten would go to Arizona to another center called Winslow. The staffs from Ouachita and Winslow were there at Catoctin, and gradually the enrollees were sorted out into three groups, partly on basis of their preference, and partly to make sure of an even balance between rural and urban and Negro

and white Corpsmen at each center. Chester didn't like the snow, so he chose Winslow.

So a week later, Chester, nine other Corpsmen, and a couple of members of the Winslow center staff boarded a plane for Chicago. The Corpsmen were excited. None of them had been on an airplane before; lunch in the air was a new experience, especially when they ate one lunch between Washington and Chicago, and another as soon as they took off from Chicago. Finally, well after dark and a plane change later, they landed at Winslow, Arizona. It was pitch black beyond the lighted outlines of the small airport, and the Corpsmen were quickly bundled into a couple of panel trucks and an old car that belonged to the center. Off they went over dark highways, so dark as a matter of fact that the little caravan missed the turnoff to the center and went several miles on down the road before they realized it. Finally they located the right turnoff, arrived at the new site, and flopped exhausted into bed.

The next morning was an eye-opener for the ten boys from Baltimore and Appalachia. For Winslow is an old Air Force radar station set on a plateau which rises out of what can only be called a desert. In the clear, crisp morning air, the horizon twenty miles away was as visible as the grains of sand at their feet. Not a single tree broke the straight-line geometry of the landscape. Mars wouldn't have been more unfamiliar to their eyes

than this scene of seemingly endless sand. A few weeks later, a new Job Corps recruit assigned to Winslow got off the plane at the airport, looked around in bewilderment at the strange surroundings, and asked, "When's the next plane out?" He was on it.

Looking around the center, there were several low buildings organized in even ranks, military style. Off on one side, the first allotment of "equipment" for the center had arrived — a miscellaneous collection of half a dozen decade-old trucks, fork-lifts, and other vehicles in various stages of disrepair. Over in the mess hall, the cook was doing the best he could to get breakfast ready on a stove hooked up at the last minute with a jerry-built connection; most of the rest of the kitchen equipment lay inoperable, and for the next two months, all the dishes had to be done by hand because the dishwasher hadn't been installed. Most of the books and materials for the education program hadn't arrived yet; one shipment had gotten as far as Flagstaff, an hour's drive away, but then was returned to the sender marked "Addressee Unknown." For the work program, only a few hand tools were available, but that didn't really matter too much. The enrollees at the center spent the first couple of months just getting the buildings ready to house the full complement of 205 Corpsmen for which the center was designed. As the weeks passed, new recruits into the Job Corps

started to arrive at Winslow and the on-board strength grew gradually to thirty, and then fifty, and then eighty.

Winslow had its problems getting its buildings in shape, its classrooms stocked, its work crews equipped, its procedures and schedules organized, and its staff on board and trained. For months, the flow of Corpsmen recruits into the center always seemed to exceed the flow of badly needed supplies, equipment, and additional staff. Six months later the center was still trying to complete work on some of the basic facilities.

But Winslow was not alone. Every Job Corps center faced this crisis, a crisis created by the enormous effort needed to build, stock, equip, and staff a center and the inexorable pressure from Washington to get enrollees into centers fast. A year before Shriver had predicted to Congress that forty thousand Corpsmen would be in the Job Corps by June 30 if Congress acted rapidly. Congress did not act rapidly, and it was late fall before any major commitments would be made to start work on Job Corps centers; this meant that the best construction weather was lost for many centers, and by December, everyone realized that the original target was out of the question. The sights were lowered to only twenty-five thousand on board in June. By the end of March, less than a thousand enrollees were in the eight centers which had officially opened. And the sights were lowered

again. Grudgingly Shriver agreed to a rock-bottom target; there must be at least ten thousand on board at the end of the fiscal year. He would have liked to have seen more.

The Job Corps wheels creaked and clanked with stubborn slowness. There were recruits aplenty, and screening agencies were already complaining about the long wait between the time a boy was tested and screened, and the time he got his travel orders to a center. The bottleneck lay in getting the centers ready for the trainees. By the end of April, hardly two thousand enrollees were in Job Corps centers; thirty days later the figure had edged up to nearly five thousand, but that left five thousand more to go to reach Shriver's target.

What became known as "Operation 10,000" went into effect, and plans were drawn up, center by center, to do whatever was necessary to meet the ten-thousand target. Travel orders went out, and the on-board figures reported daily to Job Corps headquarters from each center inched upward again. Six thousand was passed after ten days, and then seven thousand ten days later. Then in the last few days of June, nearly four thousand more Corpsmen arrived at the gates of Job Corps centers across the entire United States. In the Operations Center at Job Corps headquarters in Washington, where all communications from centers were received by teletype or telephone, several dozen of the senior headquarters staff gath-

ered in the late evening of June 30 to celebrate the end of Job Corps' first fiscal year. Hour by hour the enrollee count reported by centers grew, but with agonizing slowness for those who had slaved over the last year to get the program off the ground.

Finally, at just ten minutes before midnight on June 30, the count reached five figures for the first time. The target had been met. Champagne was broken out, and Shriver was roused out of bed to hear a raucous chorus of "Happy Ten Thousand to You" over the telephone.

But there were few celebrations at the receiving end. For in the centers, the massive buildup had strained capacities to and sometimes beyond their limits. At one conservation center, nearly two hundred enrollees arrived despite some last-minute delays in getting the center ready; they were bedded down on the floor of the local high school gymnasium for several days. Another conservation center was still trying to recruit at least half of its staff complement; but a full-capacity shipment of Corpsmen recruits arrived.

The big urban centers had it even tougher. Because they could hold many more enrollees, they were all faced with a steady stream of new Corpsman arrivals. It seemed as if the buses could hardly get back to the center from the airport with one load before a new group would arrive. Resident workers and dormitory counselors, who were the key front-line staff members in explaining to

the Corpsmen how the center operated and in making sure a modicum of discipline was maintained, were hired and pressed into service without orientation or training of any sort. Stocks of clothing ran out. Cafeteria lines lengthened. Counselors were swamped. Educational materials were exhausted. And what little vocational training and work equipment was ready for use couldn't handle the demands.

For the first ten thousand Corpsmen, the Job Corps didn't live up to its advertising. Enthusiastic screeners had taken the recruitment materials literally, and often had apparently even expanded on the glowing image presented in them. So new recruits arrived fully expecting to be assigned their own personal bulldozer, or to step directly into a personalized job training program using advanced equipment on their first day in the center. They anticipated a fully planned schedule of sports, every weekend off in town with lots of opportunities to meet admiring girls, and an informal, care-free life with new friends in bright new surroundings.

What they found was a center still half-finished, an overworked and harassed staff, many of whom were just as new to the Job Corps as the recruits, a disorganized administrative system, practically no equipment to work with, and a code of unexpected restrictions, rules, and regulations. They also found out — very quickly — that group living with

other Job Corpsmen was no tea party; it was a rough, tough society in which raw power tended to set the pecking order despite the presence of resident workers and counselors in the dormitories.

By early June, the effects of this mismatch between expectation and fact were already evident in Job Corps centers. On June 12, the *New York Times* juxtaposed two stories about the Job Corps which epitomized the next ulcer-generating headaches for Job Corps staff and all-consuming fascinations for Job Corps critics. On the front page, Joe Loftus reported that fifty of the first 162 Corpsmen sent to Catoctin had dropped out of the program. Following this, a news service clip indicated that several Corpsmen at Atterbury Job Corps center in Indiana had been arrested and charged with committing a group sexual assault on a fellow trainee.

For the next few months, the dominant problems for the Job Corps were keeping the Corpsmen from dropping out in large numbers, and maintaining control over those who stayed in.

The great dropout debate actually began in late May when *Newsweek* magazine reported that 17.5 percent of the recruits who had entered centers since January had already left the program. Shriver winced when he read the article. Something had to be done to change the impact of that figure.

What followed over the next few months was an extraordinary exercise in statistical manipulation

which thoroughly confused the issue, both within the Job Corps itself and in the public mind. Furthermore, no matter how the statistics were manipulated, the fact was that neither rational men nor qualified experts could agree whether fairly large numbers of dropouts were to be expected, or meant that the program suffered from some basic weakness.

Newsweek had reported a concrete fact. Three hundred and eighty-five out of 2,268 Job Corps recruits had already quit. But even within the Job Corps, some said this was better than anyone should have expected. After all, every boy who came into the Job Corps was already a dropout and used to quitting—from school, from work, and from almost anything else he had ever tried. If the Job Corps could hold five out of six of its recruits, it was doing extraordinarily well. On the other hand, others argued just as vehemently that this dropout rate meant that something was basically wrong—that some sort of crash program to reduce dropouts had to be put into effect fast.

In order to find out more about who dropped out, and why, a survey was undertaken in mid-June. This revealed some interesting facts. Out of the first six thousand recruits, eleven hundred had dropped out, already been discharged, or had left for medical reasons. But three quarters of those who had dropped out had spent less than a month in Job Corps. The typical dropout came to a cen-

ter, stayed a week or ten days, got homesick or decided he didn't like what he saw, and left. If a recruit stuck it out for the first month, the chances of his dropping out later on were much smaller.

So the Job Corps quickly revised its dropout data. Of the eleven hundred dropouts in the survey, only about two hundred had actually spent more than thirty days in the Job Corps and then voluntarily resigned. Comparing this two hundred to the total of six thousand recruits, the new dropout rate suddenly became not 17.5 percent but 3.2 percent. Shriver immediately seized hold of this figure, and in a typical Shriverism, told the Senate Subcommittee a few days later:

If you are as old as I am, you will remember the days when there was a law coming in to permit the sale of 3.2 beer because it was generally agreed, I think, that 3.2 beer was weak enough so that it was practically harmless to anybody who imbibed it. Well, that actually is the dropout rate, 3.2, in the Job Corps.

Although Shriver didn't intend it to be, this figure was grossly misleading. Four thousand of those six thousand Job Corps recruits had come into centers in the big end-of-the-year push, and hadn't even been in a month; therefore they couldn't possibly have showed up as dropouts using the definitions in effect at the time.

A more meaningful comparison would have compared the two hundred Corpsmen who had remained in the Job Corps more than thirty days and then dropped out to the total number of recruits who had arrived at Job Corps centers through mid-May, and therefore could have spent thirty days or more in Job Corps by mid-June. This would have yielded a dropout rate roughly four times higher than the figure Shriver quoted.

Shriver's overoptimistic and premature report of success in keeping enrollees in the Job Corps did not prevent the Senate Subcommittee from boring in later in the day with an intensive barrage of questions. Was it true, Senator Fannin from Arizona asked, that the dropout rate at the Winslow Job Corps center was 30 percent every *month*? Fortunately the Senator's information badly overstated the situation. Winslow had taken in 203 enrollees of whom 149 were still on board. One third of those had arrived in mid-June, however, so they had hardly had time to decide to drop out. Winslow's real dropout rate at this time was more than 30 percent since its opening in January, but not 30 percent a month.

Actually the tremendous influx of new recruits during the month of June, together with all the other severe pressures on Job Corps headquarters staff to get the new program off the ground, made meaningful calculations of dropout rates almost impossible. Almost inevitably, rational discussions

of the subject ended up in a debate over statistical methods. As the months passed, and the enrollment rate of new recruits coming into Job Corps slowed down, a somewhat clearer picture emerged. About one out of every six recruits would leave the Job Corps before he had spent a month in a center. Of those who stayed through the first month, about one out of every eight would later decide to leave before completing his course of study.

Though the whole dropout problem was widely discussed at Job Corps headquarters and in centers throughout the summer of 1965, no crash program was ever implemented to try to shrink the number of enrollees who left prematurely, many of them after only a few days at a center. After twenty months of operation, the dropout rate appeared to have leveled off at a fairly constant figure not much below the experience during the first few months of operation. In early 1966, the Job Corps changed its screening policy to require that all new recruits sign a pledge to remain in the Corps at least ninety days. But even this did not significantly affect the situation.

Today many recruits still join the Job Corps, and then leave after only a few days or weeks, and many others who have partly completed their training will decide to leave before the end of their course. The early departures seem to leave because screeners still have difficulty preparing them

correctly for what life at a center will really be like, and because some simply find that they cannot adjust to group living. Once having gotten past the first few weeks at a center, enrollees are more likely to leave because of some personal or family crisis, or because they think that they are ready to start a job with what they have already learned.

Though the dropout issue continued to remain a matter of interest to the press and Congress, it quickly took a back seat in the nation's newspapers to a much more news-worthy issue — an ever growing number of colorful incidents ranging from the sensational to the just plain sordid.

No one in the Job Corps was surprised at the fact that incidents involving Corpsmen started happening inside centers and in communities nearby. These were expected, given the habits of the young men and women being enrolled. But that did not make these clashes any easier to explain to Congress, the press, or irate local citizens, when they occurred. And, beginning in June, a growing list of unpleasant and sometimes extremely serious incidents broke out.

At Lewiston, in northern California, Corpsmen from the conservation center were accused — rightfully — of firing a pistol in a downtown parking lot, buying liquor which was shared with underage enrollees, and loitering around town without supervision. Two Corpsmen in the center also got into a fight, and one cut the other on the hand.

While local citizens and Job Corps center staff ironed out the problems successfully within a few days, San Francisco papers inflated the incident to national significance. In Senate subcommittee hearings in late June, recently elected Senator George Murphy made a special effort to read this occurrence into the record.

The Atterbury incident reported in the *New York Times* occurred the following week, and was immediately eclipsed by an extremely tense situation at the Tongue Point Job Corps center near Astoria, Oregon. There, two good solid fistfights in one evening brought most of the Corpsmen at the base out of their beds for the night, and for several hours they milled around uncertainly. A major outbreak was probably just barely avoided. Hearing about the incident, Governor Mark Hatfield later called for the federal government to take special measures to maintain discipline and control at Tongue Point.

Meanwhile, Camp Parks, run by Litton Industries just outside San Francisco, was plagued by a troublesome series of fires in several different buildings on the base. Two alleged sodomies in conservation centers in Arkansas and Oregon were not widely reported, but generated great uneasiness in Job Corps headquarters and the conservation agencies which ran the centers. And then several Corpsmen from Heber Job Corps center in northern Arizona were accused of raping an Indian

girl after plying her with alcohol. While all this was happening, the girls at the St. Petersburg women's center were accused by local residents of creating a public disturbance, drunkenness, and promiscuity.

As the summer progressed, things went from bad to worse. In mid-July, several Job Corpsmen from the Gary center in Texas not far from the state capital, Austin, tried to hold up two Air Force enlisted men on the streets of San Antonio one evening. The airmen resisted, and one of the Corpsmen pulled a gun. In the ensuing struggle, both airmen were shot, one very seriously.

Back at Atterbury in Indiana, the general attitude of local citizens and the press turned hostile, and a rash of criticism appeared in the press reporting minor local incidents and other very real troubles within the center. During its crucial opening weeks, the Board of Directors changed center directors three times, and staff as well as Corpsmen morale hit rock bottom.

But the worst and most widely publicized incident that occurred was the "riot" at Breckinridge in western Kentucky. Breckinridge was operated by Southern Illinois University. While the university modified some of its administrative procedures, it still basically relied on the same systems which worked for a quiet university campus to get the Job Corps center open. Even relatively routine equipment purchases for the center had to go

through complex review and approval procedures on the main campus at Carbondale, Illinois, nearly a two-hour drive away. As a result, preparations for getting the center ready, the classes in operation, and the vocational training equipment set up got hopelessly bogged down.

In addition administrative direction at the center itself tended to fall into the university mold. Universities, by nature, are not *run*; most universities are loose confederations of autonomous departments, each with almost complete internal independence to design its own operations. Universities do not operate in a tightly synchronized manner like a production line. Nor do complex systems management problems, like getting a rocket off the ground, occur often in a typical university system. So it was that Breckinridge developed a very decentralized, loosely coordinated administrative system. Teachers operated in one orbit, counselors in another, and dormitory workers in a third. Their orbits rarely crossed. And the Corpsmen quickly took over real control of the center. A major extortion racket flourished, hazing and fights were common, and absenteeism went largely unnoticed and unpunished.

On top of this, about ten staff members formed a civil rights activist group determined to integrate by direct action several still segregated motels and restaurants in the area. This group also encouraged informal Corpsmen discussions stressing an

activist civil rights policy; whether by intent or miscalculation, these discussions created a high degree of race consciousness within the center. The center director was well aware of these activities. But the leader of this group had tenure in the university system and had also developed close ties with civil rights groups in surrounding local communities.

The tremendous influx of several hundred new Job Corps recruits under "Operation 10,000" during June broke the situation wide open in ensuing weeks. The trainees were frustrated because there was no job training set up, nor equipment for them to work with. Life in the barracks ran according to Corpsman law — and that was the law of the jungle. Racial tensions ran high, and were aggravated by a "Demonstration for Jobs in Western Kentucky" organized by the NAACP which sent several busloads of placard-carrying civil rights song-singing Negroes into the center in early August. The center administration became paralyzed.

A few days later, several fistfights started around the mess hall. A big crowd of onlookers gathered. In a terrible error of judgment, the center administration called out the fire truck — to Negroes, one of the typical symbols of control and repression. The truck and its driver were mobbed, and pandemonium broke loose. Half the enrollees fled in fear to nearby towns. The state police were called in to

restore and maintain order. And the incident was headlined in the Chicago papers.

Ten weeks later, several dozen Job Corpsmen from Custer Job Corps center in Michigan got into a brawl with local teen-agers and the police in Battle Creek, only hours after Shriver himself had visited the center for its dedication. Headlines again splashed across the front pages of newspapers in the region. Job Corps had another black eye.

Despite efforts by Shriver and Job Corps to down-play the significance of these incidents, and to show that they were no worse than many unreported happenings on college campuses, the general public and Congress became convinced that the Job Corps had problems controlling the enrollees in its centers. In Job Corps headquarters, top management became consumed with the problem of how to get back-up riot control forces out to Job Corps centers quickly in the event enrollees should get out of hand again. The word "permissiveness" as it applied to Corpsman discipline was cast in disrepute, and the order of the day became "tighten up."

In retrospect, however, a sounder judgment would have to cast much of the blame for these control problems on center staffs still unfamiliar with how to deal with large numbers of Corpsmen, and center training programs which still did not

match up with Job Corps recruiting literature. Minor incidents involving Corpsmen still occur regularly — petty thievery, vandalism, drunkenness, and disorderly conduct. Nor has the possibility of another major incident evaporated. In May 1966, for instance, several dozen Corpsmen from the Rodman Job Corps center in New Bedford, Massachusetts, broke out of the center and headed for town in order to retaliate for some insults they felt they had been subjected to. But during the summer and fall of 1966, there were three times as many Corpsmen in the Job Corps as in 1965. There were no riots. Nor had the Job Corps taken any special riot-preventive steps in the interim. The plain fact seems to be that during the intervening twelve months, the staffs in Job Corps centers learned how to keep large numbers of enrollees in line, and the implementation of more organized and better-equipped training programs reduced the tendency for Corpsmen to get out of line.

Just as these colorful and off-colorful incidents displaced the dropout debate as the center of criticism, they were in turn gradually superseded by a growing attack on issues of Job Corps administration. This attack has continued with increasing vigor and increasing effectiveness to the present day.

The first salvo in this attack made a direct hit on the very first Job Corps women's center, which had opened in St. Petersburg, Florida, in April. It was

operated through a contract with the Pinellas County Board of Education, the only contract that the Job Corps ever signed with a local school board to run a Job Corps center. The press had sharp eyes and good aim; from hindsight, it was clearly a mistake to sign a contract with a school board to take on the entire task of opening up a new center.

In the city of St. Petersburg, the Board of Education's selection for a site for the center was a hotel located half a dozen blocks from the downtown shopping center, but in a neighborhood which consisted largely of residential hotels and large rooming houses. A casual visitor strolling the nearby streets before the first enrollees arrived would have been impressed by two things. First, the utter tranquillity of the wide, tree-lined streets. Few cars passed by, and those which did obviously strictly obeyed all speed limits with a wide margin of safety. Otherwise the quiet calm of the entire area was made even more poignant by the kinds of sounds that could be heard — the swish of palm fronds as they brushed in the breeze, an occasional bird chirping or cricket's song. Second, it was a rarity to see another person in the immediate vicinity who appeared to be less than sixty-five. Before the women's center opened, nearly the entire population of the area surrounding the Huntington Hotel consisted of retired folks come to Florida for the winter months.

Predictably, the introduction of the first girls into the center was closely followed by the daily congregation of interested males who were drawn like a magnet to this new attraction. Arriving in caravans of hot rods and motorcycles, the local youths and their dates shattered the peace and quiet of this rocking chair society with sounds of screeching tires, adolescent high-volume chatter, and jukeboxes playing the latest favorites. Nearby hotel and rooming-house owners protested vehemently, but largely in vain. More policemen were assigned to the area, but the fact was that not much could be done to satisfy the neighbors. Teen-agers are bound to make noise — much more noise than septuagenarians. The School Board had made a hopelessly irrevocable error in choosing the site.

On top of this, the building itself was ill-suited for use by the Job Corps. It was several decades old, and the upstairs living quarters were strictly third class. The floors were buckled and warped like a fun house in an amusement park and it was not air-conditioned, since most of its residents migrated north for the summer. But this left the girls on the top floors sweltering in 100-plus degree heat during June, July, and August. Nevertheless, the lobby had been graciously modernized to give visitors the impression it was a luxury establishment. A tropical garden on one side overflowed with luxuriant tropical plants and trees, but left

little room for athletic recreation. The girls had to be bussed across town to most of their classes.

Enterprising reporters quickly dug out the fact that the rent being charged for the hotel was about half of its tax-assessed valuation, and on top of that, the Job Corps was paying tens of thousands of dollars to replace its wiring and renovate its kitchens. Even though the total rent cost figured out at a low \$1.30 per girl per day, rumors of kickbacks ran rife in connection with the controversial lease. Then a particularly vicious and malevolent series of articles in the *Chicago Tribune*, reprinted nationally, portrayed the staff as shot through with seething discontent and jurisdictional rivalry.

This concentrated heat on the first Job Corps women's center brought the situation to full boil. In short order, the center director resigned, and the School Board, in full panic, suddenly voted to terminate the contract with the Job Corps. Several rescue missions from Job Corps headquarters succeeded in getting the Board to reverse its position later, and special efforts in the community resulted in the organization of a "Friends of the Job Corps" club. But the damage was done, the center continued to operate under a cloud. The next spring, the School Board looked for other sites, selected one, and proudly announced its decision. Unfortunately someone had not done his homework with

the city planners; the new site was right in the middle of an urban renewal area, and negotiations for a major grant from the urban renewal agency in Washington were already in progress. It was another fiasco. A few weeks later, the Job Corps announced that the contract for the St. Petersburg center would not be renewed, and it would be closed down.

Following the St. Petersburg fizzle, criticism turned to the two men's centers which had experienced early control problems — Breckinridge and Atterbury.

At all three, Job Corps headquarters had already stopped all further assignments of new enrollees until the problems were solved. At both Atterbury and Breckinridge, this quickly resulted in a situation in which there were as many people on the staff running the center as there were enrollees getting training. At Atterbury, the Board of Directors of the Midwest Educational Foundation which had contracted to run the center fired the first director shortly after the center opened, hired another who lasted only a couple of weeks, and then, belatedly, hired a third to take charge of the massive project. A conscientious and dedicated but relatively colorless school superintendent, he never really had a chance to salvage what was left by the time he took over.

Meanwhile, local newspapers discovered that at least fifty employees at the Breckinridge center

also had their wives on the payroll, including the center director himself. Charges of nepotism were at once splashed on the front pages, even though Southern Illinois University had adopted the husband-and-wife team policy quite consciously on the basis that it made it easier to get good people to staff the center in its relatively isolated location, which lacked the kinds of cultural refinements top professionals often wanted.

In ensuing months, the Atterbury and Breckinridge situations did not improve substantially, despite a variety of last-ditch efforts to overcome their early difficulties. The number of Corpsmen which it was felt safe to assign was far below the potential capacity of each. Dropouts continued to plague both in large numbers, and nearby communities were slow to forget the troubled early days. At Shriver's personal urging, the contracts with both Southern Illinois and Midwest Educational Foundation were allowed to expire, and corporations took over the management of both centers.

By this time it was becoming quite clear at Job Corps headquarters that corporations seemed to be able to move faster and more effectively to get urban centers open than universities or non-profit groups. The large urban centers at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, run by the Federal Electric Corporation, and at Camp Parks in California, operated by Litton Industries, were by no means free of problems, but they were operating, there were real job

training programs going, the enrollees seemed to be under control, and more of them seemed to be staying in the program. Shriver voiced this opinion publicly several times during the fall of 1965, and testified to this point before the House Appropriations Committee. This move irked the Texas State Education Agency and Texas Governor Connally, who considered this a slap in the face for their operation of Gary Job Corps center only a few miles from the Governor's office in Austin, Texas. Nevertheless, Gary had also been faced with serious trouble getting going during its early months, but had been saved by a group of Texas businessmen who banded together to inject a cadre of industrial managers and financial planners into the center during the summer of 1965. There is little doubt that this move was a pivotal step in the evolution of Gary, and is largely responsible for keeping it off the Atterbury-Breckinridge-St. Petersburg list.

On top of these difficulties with specific centers, other administrative issues arose. In November it was announced that the Job Corps would lay out well over a million dollars to pay round trips home for the Christmas holidays for nearly all the Corpsmen at centers. Actually there was very little additional government expense involved in this operation. Every Corpsman was told when he signed up that he was eligible to have one round-trip home a year at government expense, but would have to wait at least six months before he

could invoke this privilege. The Christmas leave program simply waived this six-month limit, so that Corpsmen could take their one trip a year home even though they hadn't actually been in a full six months.

What the Christmas leave program did was to sharpen the image in the minds of the public that their money was being spent to fly poor kids across the country by jet. Letters poured into Shriver's office from parents of college students demanding to know why they should pay for some strange and probably undeserving Job Corpsman's trip home when the government wasn't going to pay anything to get their own hard-working and deserving sons and daughters home for the holidays. Congressmen were already upset that Job Corps enrollees from Massachusetts often ended up in centers in California, and recruits from the West Coast would be flown to Indiana or New Jersey. Congressional inquiries wanting to know the actual costs of the Christmas leave program and the total amount Job Corps spent on enrollee transportation started to flow in.

In November, another incident occurred probably not much unlike hundreds of teen-age gang assaults that happen in slums every day. But because it happened in the Job Corps, and because of some special circumstances it involved, it created repercussions throughout both the Senate and House of Representatives on Capitol Hill.

At the Mountain Home conservation center in Idaho, one enrollee antagonized some other Corpsmen and a fight started. One of the assailants pulled a knife, and after a few moments of fighting, the Corpsman who had caused the initial hostility was cut several times, and ended up with a serious stab wound in the stomach. What brought this incident to the headlines were facts uncovered only during later investigation. The boy who had wielded the knife had three previous felony convictions in his home state of California, and had actually jumped probation in one county, before he enrolled in the Job Corps. The local screener had not been able to unearth any of this information. As a result, the Job Corps was in the position of having transported a convicted criminal who had jumped probation across state lines from California to Idaho. Moreover, once in the Job Corps, this Corpsman had actually been identified as having "leadership capacities" and had been promoted to the position of Corpsman leader.

Job Corps staff had long feared just such an occurrence. For they knew from their initial investigations that, in many states, judges feel that court records should not be open to general public scrutiny, like books in the public library. Screeners often got little or no cooperation when they tried to find out the court record of an individual, and some enrollees had moved around so much that it

was a virtual impossibility to cover every jurisdiction where he might have a conviction registered. A few instances had already arisen where center staff ascertained after a Corpsman was enrolled that he had a criminal record which would have disqualified him from the Corps if the screener had found it out. There were also unproven suspicions that screeners were sometimes less than thorough in trying to uncover criminal convictions.

Coincidentally, another Job Corps recruit attempted to shoot a policeman in a Montana bar, but wounded a lady patron instead. He was charged with the crime, but sent to Breckinridge Job Corps center in Kentucky to await trial. At Breckinridge he was restricted to the center and kept under intensive care by counselors. But the date of the trial dragged on and on. Finally, after six months of waiting, he went AWOL from Breckinridge, stole a car, and then smashed it head-on at high speed into the car of a family of four on their vacation. All four members of the family died as a result of the accident.

These two incidents created a major press stir in both Idaho and Montana, which was too much for Senator Mike Mansfield, the majority leader, to let go unnoticed. In his always restrained fashion, he wrote to Shriver: "I do not like admonishing the Job Corps . . . but it seems to me that there is something wrong." The junior Senator from Mon-

tana, Lee Metcalf, was less restrained. "This incident is wrong and really burns me up," he thundered.

Though both of these incidents were similar to some of the more gruesome occurrences of the early months of operation, they were clearly interpreted differently by Congress. No longer could they be crossed off to an incompetent contractor, or simply explained away by pointing to the lack of experience. They provided a springboard for launching an attack at fundamental Job Corps policies and administration—a faulty screening mechanism, too much permissiveness in *all* the centers, too much mollycoddling of enrollees who fouled up, not enough concern for the Corpsmen who really wanted to make good.

While the Job Corps was coming under fire from one side for having too permissive an attitude toward Corpsmen in centers, forces which maintained precisely the opposite point of view were rallying on the other flank. Their position was revealed when the confidential Rutgers University Advisory Committee Report evaluating the operations of the Kilmer Job Corps center was leaked to the press in mid-November 1965. It was a bombshell.

The contents of this report questioned not just the operation of Camp Kilmer, but the whole philosophy on which the Job Corps was planned and passed by Congress. Its writers maintained, essen-

tially, that teen-agers from disadvantaged backgrounds cannot be "resocialized" by placing them in a completely artificial environment like a Job Corps center. Obviously written with a pen dipped in rancor, the report then went on to attack nearly every facet of Federal Electric's operation of the Kilmer center, ranging from philosophy down to administrative detail. But the major target of the attack was what the report described as the "authoritarian and autocratic controls" which the writers perceived as dominating life at the Job Corps center. "With each passing week, the operation has assumed a more military-like atmosphere," the report went on. Vocational training instructors were excoriated for being "unnecessarily punitive." The staff as a whole was taken to task for withdrawing privileges and for other kinds of overt punishment, including expulsion from the Corps, as commonly invoked methods for controlling enrollee behavior. At the end, the Rutgers Group recommended that "the autocratic-authoritarian type of administration should yield to a type of approach which would serve as a model for future democratic living by Corpsmen," and urged "the removal of all vestiges of military procedures."

The publication of the substance of the Rutgers report created a great stir at Federal Electric's headquarters in Paramus. For, after profits, one of the most precious treasures of every large corpora-

tion is its image. Any corporate official who does something to tarnish corporate image can expect swift and drastic retribution. The Rutgers report certainly didn't help Federal Electric's corporate image. But when Federal Electric officials met with Rutgers University President Gross, they found themselves confronted with the unfamiliar principles of university administration — academic freedom and tenure. In other words, university professors had a right to speak out, regardless of their views, without risk to their careers at the university. To Federal Electric President Chasen, it was a rude awakening to learn that the university was in no position to appropriately "discipline" its advisory group for their outspoken criticism.

Lastly, on top of all these other criticisms, came the assault on the Job Corps costs and financial administration. In Charleston, West Virginia, trouble arose with another allegedly exorbitant hotel lease agreement. But this time, politics also got involved; the hotel was owned by a syndicate in which a well-known state Democratic politician had a major interest.

At the Gary Job Corps center in Texas, critics pointed out that more than two hundred staff members were drawing salaries in excess of nine thousand dollars a year, and that many of the staff were getting paid more than twice as much as they had earned in their previous jobs. In vain, the Gary

management pointed out that most of these were teachers whose previous salary was based on a nine-month term sprinkled with several vacations.

With the expanding war in Vietnam, adverse comparisons between the tough life of a private in the Army and the "soft" life of a Job Corpsman became more prevalent. Most of these suggested that deserving youth who worked hard and got through school would most likely get drafted into the Army at seventy-eight dollars per month, while those who dropped out might drop right into the Job Corps where they would get eighty dollars per month or more plus paid trips home and special allowances to buy civilian clothes.

But the issue which bore the brunt of the criticism beginning in early 1966, and which is still the storm center of the biggest Job Corps controversy, was the overall cost of operating Job Corps centers. When the Job Corps was first proposed to Congress in 1964, the financial estimates predicted that it would cost about forty-seven hundred dollars per enrollee per year. No one had much confidence in these figures since there was very little experience to suggest what actual costs might be. This was the best estimate that could be calculated; even though some of the assumptions underlying the estimate were optimistic, they didn't seem unrealistically optimistic.

A year later, but still with very little operational experience behind the program, the estimates were

revised. Now it was expected that it would cost about forty-five hundred dollars per enrollee in the Job Corps. But there was a kicker. This was based on an average stay of only nine months rather than a full year. In fact, the new cost projections were already nearly one-third higher than the original estimates.

By the spring of 1966, however, the Job Corps had been in operation fifteen months; the time for estimates and projections was over. It was time for facts. And demanding to know the facts was Mrs. Green. At the House Subcommittee hearings in March, she bored in. As she bored, she caught the Job Corps dead to rights in an error which aggravated an already touchy problem. Some figures which she had obtained only a few weeks earlier from the Job Corps had omitted the capital investment costs at each center, and therefore understated the per enrollee cost substantially. It was revealed that the actual cost per enrollee in the Job Corps was more than twelve thousand dollars a year. Job Corps critics seized on this figure with glee, and it became the major news story of the hearings.

Reporters dug further into the Job Corps statistics and came up with the seemingly scandalous but actually misleading fact that it cost the Job Corps nearly forty thousand dollars for every graduate from the St. Petersburg women's center, and nearly thirty thousand dollars for every gradu-

ate from the Custer Job Corps center in Michigan. These figures were about as meaningful for analysis or decision-making as the unit costs for the first hundred Ford Mustangs to come off the production line would have been. But they made good press.

The cumulative impact of all Job Corps publicity, taken collectively — the troubles in getting centers open, the dropouts, the incidents, the internal controversies, and the high costs — has created an image of the program in the public mind and Congressional eye which is hardly creditable. The Job Corps appears to be an expensive boondoggle which ships juvenile delinquents and hoodlums across the country by jet, mollycoddles them in camps which are shot through with gang fights, looses them each weekend on defenseless communities to riot and vandalize private property, and shows no notable success in turning them into better, more productive citizens.

There is a grain of truth in this image — but not much more. For it is no more accurate than the image of all Jews as shrewd money-sharpers, all the Irish as whisky-drinking sots, all Italians as undercover Mafia members, all Frenchmen as incurable lovers, all Germans as power-hungry militarists, or all Englishmen as stuffy Colonel Blimps hankering for the good old colonial days.

Several factors have combined to create this misrepresentation of the Job Corps. More than

most other parts of the poverty program, the Job Corps has been a victim of the old adage that bad news makes good reading and good news makes bad reading. Job Corpsmen fight forest fires, help clean up communities hit by tornadoes and floods, give blood, plant trees, build Little League ball-parks in local communities, act as guides at the New York World's Fair, give shows at homes for orphans and the aged, and contribute to the collection plates of local churches. They turn away from provocations thrown at them by teen-agers in local communities, study, work, and play hard at their centers, and become well liked by local families. And some of them — but not nearly enough — have joined the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Marine Corps, gone on to college, and gotten jobs. But little of this activity gets written up in the newspapers, and even less gets read.

In addition, the Job Corps had been scrutinized more closely than many other parts of the poverty program, and is more vulnerable to criticism. Of all the ten programs enacted under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the Job Corps is the only one which places a direct responsibility on federal agencies for actually operating a large and very complex program. Nearly all the other programs consist of grants to state or local agencies or loans to individuals; in each case the federal government assumes the responsibility for reviewing the application, but the agency or individual receiving the

funds takes the direct responsibility for designing the program, hiring the staff, buying the equipment, and administering the funds. The Job Corps, on the other hand, did not just review applications and make grants; for conservation centers, the Job Corps, together with the conservation agencies, had to go out and recruit the staff, decide what to buy and how to buy it, build the centers, and then make sure that they ran right. For the urban centers under contract, the Job Corps had to recruit, screen, and assign the Corpsmen, and directly monitor the performance of each contractor.

The fact that a federal agency was personally in the driver's seat made the Job Corps unique as part of the poverty program, and tended to draw more attention to it. When this scrutiny uncovered a problem, in many cases there was no one on whom the Jobs Corps could cast the blame. In the grant programs there was always a local agency on whom the blame could be thrown, or who at the very minimum had to share the heat of criticism. In some instances — St. Petersburg, Breckinridge, Atterbury — the Job Corps could point to contractors unequal to the tasks they assumed. But in most other cases there was no buffer to insulate the program from the shock of a well-publicized mistake or alleged scandal, nor was there any convenient scapegoat.

Furthermore the Job Corps was a "foreign agent" in most communities. Very few of the recruits came

from the locale of the center, or even from the same state. Much of the staff was also brought in from outside. And in many cases the urban center contractors had no special previous ties in the towns near the centers where they operated. As a result, Job Corps centers were more exposed and quicker to be criticized than programs operated by local people.

The fact that the public image of the Job Corps is bad is of more than passing importance. The low state of public and congressional esteem for the program tends to demoralize central administration, makes it difficult to keep good staff members in the centers, and even harder to find good replacements for those who leave, and colors the attitudes of Corpsmen toward the program and the local communities near centers. Finding some way to freshen and upgrade the image of the Job Corps is one absolutely critical step in improving the quality of the program as a whole.

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CONCLUSION

AS Sargent Shriver led off the poverty program hearings on St. Patrick's Day of 1964, he pledged that "if, as time goes on, we find that any of these programs is not making a contribution to the total effort, we will change that program or get rid of it. . . ." In 1966, Congress came close to asking Shriver to make good on that pledge. Obviously riled at the administration of the program, Congress tacked several amendments onto the Job Corps section of the legislation designed to force tighter discipline, better evaluation, and a different method for assigning enrollees to centers. Well-founded rumors disclosed that a proposal to transfer the entire program to the Labor Department was beaten down by the closest of margins in the House Education and Labor Committee. And it was a grudging Congress that approved \$211 million to continue operations for another year, \$17 million less than the Administration asked for. Had

it not been for that fact that the Job Corps had already spent more than \$100 million in building, modernizing, and equipping more than one hundred centers, the cuts might have been far deeper.

Clearly the Job Corps has fallen far short of the goals set out for it in 1964. In part this is because the program was oversold to begin with. Its superficial similarity to the Civilian Conservation Corps led many to hope that it could emulate its predecessor's success. But the similarity was only superficial. In fact, the Job Corps was an incredibly more complex undertaking. The Civilian Conservation Corps was concerned only with taking men off the streets and putting them to work; it was a solution to an economic problem. But the Job Corps was designed to solve a social problem; it had to do everything the CCC did, and on top of that it had to figure out ways to rework social attitudes, build work skills, and imbue its enrollees with the habits of good citizenship.

Moreover the Civilian Conservation Corps was able to use existing organizations to overcome the challenge of getting into operation fast. This option was closed to the Job Corps by the early demise of the proposal to use the Defense Department to handle Job Corps planning and logistics. Operating without funds, the Job Corps planning group in 1964 was hobbled in any attempt to mobilize talent, start construction, purchase initial allotments of equipment, or develop training materi-

als. Once appropriations became available, the task of recruiting staff and putting together an organization took months.

Then the Job Corps success formula of remedial education and job training in residential centers proved illusory. There was, in fact, no success formula which the Job Corps could rely on to achieve its stated objectives.

Other parts of the poverty program faced a similar crisis as they got under way. And in retrospect, it is evident that even the experts, in 1964, underestimated the deep-rootedness of poverty, and consequently overestimated the country's ability to devise effective solutions for those caught in its clutches. So rapidly had the social consensus of the country changed in the early 1960's, and so quickly had this change been translated into political action, that neither our understanding of the complexities of the problem nor our technologies for solving it could catch up. As a result, the Job Corps was caught in a hopeless position — reliable technologies simply didn't exist for achieving the extremely ambitious goals which had been set for it.

In short, overoptimistic expectations are largely responsible for much of the disappointment and disillusionment over the Job Corps today. But this is hardly a reason for crossing it off as a failure. And there is a far more important problem which needs to be considered in determining its future.

The Job Corps was enacted by Congress as a program to help eliminate poverty. But there are real questions as to whether on balance it has reduced or aggravated the problem. Job Corps press releases stress the number of graduates now leaving centers and taking jobs, or joining the Armed Forces, or returning to school. And there is little doubt that *some* of these graduates are clearly better off than they would have been without the Job Corps experience. Unfortunately, follow-up data on Job Corps graduates is so sketchy that it is impossible to tell just how many graduates have gained a lasting benefit from their Job Corps experience, and what the degree of that benefit is.

But there is a negative side to the Job Corps balance sheet. For tens of thousands of trainees, the program which seemed to offer one last chance has turned out to mean only disillusionment, frustration, and finally defeat once again. No one knows what the social cost of a Job Corps dropout is — what price must eventually be paid to overcome the effects of reinforced failure on the teen-agers who have found they couldn't make it even in this "last resort" salvage effort. But it is certain these social costs are sizable, a fact which was documented by a Job Corps-financed poll of Job Corps dropouts carried out by the reputable and experienced survey firm of Louis Harris and Associates. The Job Corps attempted unsuccessfully to suppress the results of the survey, which showed

among other findings that unemployment was higher among Job Corps dropouts than before they enrolled, and that more than half of the unemployed dropouts were either working or in school before they entered the Job Corps. After twenty months of operation, there were six dropouts or kickouts for every Job Corps graduate — six defeats for every victory. As time passes, this ratio may improve. But until the Job Corps can demonstrate that its successes outnumber its failures, it cannot claim that it is making a positive contribution to the elimination of poverty. And so long as its contribution to the elimination of poverty remains debatable, then its essential justification is subject to serious question.

If it is questionable whether the Job Corps is helping to eliminate poverty, then it is reasonable to ask why it should be continued any longer. Why not shut it down now and stop throwing good money after bad?

The answer is that the problem the Job Corps was designed to solve still exists in massive proportions. There are still hundreds of thousands of teenagers at the bottom of the economic ladder with little hope for moving up. Every year more than one hundred thousand new candidates for unemployment and frustration turn sixteen. Out of this group, some can be helped by simpler, less costly, and more reliable programs of job training, remedial education, work experience, counseling, and

other uplift aids in their own hometowns. But there still remain a large number — no one knows how many — who will get little or no help unless they get out of where they now live and into another setting. For this group, there is no alternative but the Job Corps.

No War on Poverty worthy of the name could leave this portion of the battlefield untouched. Therefore, some program like the Job Corps must be continued as a part of the effort to eliminate poverty.

Furthermore, even though the Job Corps has scored only a few breakthroughs in social technology to date, it still has great potential for advancing our understanding of the complexities of teen-age poverty and for developing more effective solutions. As a program, it is not tied to any particular professionalism; therefore, it is free to blend different systems and approaches in almost infinite variety. It is nationwide in scope, with small and large centers in both rural and urban settings. It still has great potential to mobilize brainpower, and Congress has opened the door to day students at Job Corps centers, adding even further flexibility to the kinds of approaches that can be planned and tested.

But if the Job Corps is to achieve this potential for developing new, more effective techniques for solving the most complex teen-age poverty problems, it must change its administrative priorities.

In simplest terms, it needs to give far more attention to the *quality* of its effort, and far less to the *quantity*. There is little to be gained from pushing larger and larger numbers of trainees through programs of doubtful effectiveness which many of them fail to complete. There is much to be gained from putting far greater effort into finding out what it takes to hold the enrollees in the program and what makes a successful graduate.

In short, it would be bitter irony indeed if Congress were to shut down one of the programs most likely to produce new breakthroughs in social technology at precisely the time when our existing technologies for dealing with social problems simply do not measure up to our goals. The country needs the Job Corps today not to *solve* the problem of teen-age poverty, but *to find a way to solve it*.

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